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Atari Online News, Etc.  
A-ONE Online Magazine  
Dana P. Jacobson, Publisher/Managing Editor  
Joseph Mirando, Managing Editor

Atari Online News, Etc. Staff

Dana P. Jacobson -- Editor  
Joe Mirando -- "People Are Talking"  
Michael Burkley -- "Unabashed Atariophile"  
Albert Dayes -- "CC: Classic Chips"

With Contributions by:

Siegfried Hartmann  
John Hardie

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<http://people.delphi.com/dpj/a-one.htm>  
<http://www.icwhen.com>

A-ONE #0102

03/12/99

~ People Are Talking!	~ Netscape Comm. 4.51	~ PSX 2 News
~ Intel Case Settled!	~ AOL Hometown Woes	~ No MS Deal
~ A-ONE Feedback!	~ Employer E-Mail Spies	~ A Bug's Life
~ CoMa Update	~ Dino Crisis	~ Classic Chips

-\* Y2K Can Be Good News For You \*-  
-\* ATT Not Interested In Buying AOL!! \*-  
-\* Sega Says Sony Is Abandoning Its Consumers \*-

->From the Editor's Keyboard  
\*\*\*\*\*

"Saying it like it is!"

Well, the "opening day" nervousness is over with; we got the first issue out without a hitch! Here we are again - we didn't bail out!

We received a number of letters and public postings regarding our premiere issue. Before I comment on the general content of these letters, let me say that the initial response to Atari Online News, Etc. has been better than I had anticipated. By better, I mean that we received more feedback from this one issue, in less than a week, than we've probably received over the past year while doing the Atari section of STReport. I don't know what this means, but it's exciting. But also, the overall response has been very positive.

Has it all been positive? No, of course not. A couple of posts explained why two readers were disappointed in A-ONE. Perfectly acceptable. You let us know what you liked, and disliked. It gives us honest opinions which should help us to improve for the future. While no one likes to have himself, or his work criticized, I've learned over the years that constructive criticism should be an acceptable part of life. So, keep the comments coming, good or bad.

Although the feedback letters are elsewhere in this issue, let me make some comments here. First of all, there are primarily two people making A-ONE happen each week: Joe Mirando and myself. We've chosen to do publish A-ONE for two reasons: 1) we enjoy it, and 2) we want to give something back to an Atari community who has done a lot for us over the years. We also chose to make A-ONE a weekly publication. To us, news isn't news anymore if it's old. A bi-weekly or monthly magazine of this nature just won't work.

We also do not receive a penny for doing the magazine. We both work 40-50 hours a week at our real jobs; we make the time to make A-ONE happen - weekly. We both have families and other commitments.

Why the above? Well, I believe it's necessary for our readers to understand what goes into putting A-ONE together. While I would love to do a lot of research and make the magazine contain more Atari-specific news, time just doesn't allow it for two people. But, on the other hand, it's always been my observation that Atari users are extremely broad-minded. Rarely will you find an Atari user who is only interested in his niche world of Atari. We keep tabs on other platforms, for information purposes. Hey, most of us use other systems for either work or [additional] pleasure. Many of us own multiple gaming systems, or have owned others in the past (and likely in the future). On that basis, we've always felt that general news about the technological [computing & gaming] world around us was important. I know some readers who read our work just for that information. For me, it keeps me aware of what's going on with regard to other platforms without having to read a few dozen publications!

As we mentioned last week (remember, this is only our second issue!), we have lots of plans for A-ONE. We want to make this magazine your primary source of online information. We're not going to compete with the hard copy magazines such as Atari Computing - we can't. They're different types of publications. We can, however, complement them. We do plan to compile an up-to-date and accurate compilation of Atari dealers and sellers. We are planning a listing of various sources of information, including active developers, informative web sites, online services, and more. We're planning on various software reviews and how-to articles. And there's plenty of more to come. But don't expect it all to happen overnight!  
<grin>

And we're also looking to you, our readers, to point us in the right

direction occasionally. And contribute. Always wanted to write a review or article, but didn't have a venue for publication? Drop us a line. Have a product announcement, or want an upcoming event publicized? Send it to us. Have a great experience with a dealer, find a terrific piece of software? Tell us about it. We'll be happy to read it and use it in A-ONE. We'll even spellcheck it for you!

So, sit back, relax, and enjoy the ride. We hear you. We understand your wants and needs - we want the same things. We hope you stick with us while we get to those goals, and beyond. And if you can help us out from time to time along the way - even better. We're looking for to our journey that's just getting started!

Until next time...

#### CoMa 4.9.0

CoMa 4.9.0 supports USR Pro Message Modem Self-Mode

From: Siegfried Hartmann <Hartmann@ThePentagon.com>

Programme-Name: CoMa for Atari Voice/Pro 4.9.0 (COmmunication-MANager)

Purpose: fax & voice-mail-system, to send & receive fax,  
answering machine, mailbox & terminal with internal  
z-modem

Programme-Type: Shareware / Crippleware

Author: Siegfried Hartmann

Requirement: Computer with MagiC[Mac|PC] or TOS

Download: Softbaer-Mailbox: 030/62709-572 (ISDN X.75 & V.34)  
or Homepage: <<http://www.ThePentagon.com/Softbaer>>  
CoMa\_Atari\_4.9.0.zip (520 KBytes)

\*\*\*\*\*

CoMa has the following common functions and attributes in all levels

- english documentation
- fax-class 2 & 2.0
- polling (send poll-request-tone only with class 2.0 and some class 2-modems)
- network-capable fax-job-management (3 jobs in 24 hours)
- Serial fax
- Display of the calling-number with ISDN-modems
- Display of call units with ISDN-Modems
- internal editor
- incoming pages are displayed during fax-reception !!
- text can be mixed with graphic-logos and signatures
- fax-voice-data-number management, including groups
- management for incoming fax/messages/mails
- administration of 8 telephone companies
- zone- & and time-dependent selection of telephone-company
- mailbox with internal send & receive-z-modem
- terminal mit internal z-modem
- support of the USR 56k professional message modem self-mode

\* \* \* \* \* CoMa Voice (additional) \* \* \* \* \*

- Answering machine for ZyXEL, Creatix, Elsa/TriStar,  
Sportster VI/Voice/Flash and Smarty/Cybermod, kik & Lasat-Modems

- Day & time programmable answering messages
- Multiple outgoing messages for several ISDN-MSN
- Time dependent redirection of incoming calls
- Remote control / recall of new received faxes
- Recall of 7 special messages by DTMF-code
- Real time decoding of sound for Mac/Atari-Soundsystem of ZxXEL ADPCM3/ADPCM4, Smarty/Cybermod u-Law- & Rockwell ADPCM4-Sounds
- Wave-Sound conversion in ZyXEL- & Cybermod- & Rockwell-format

\* \* \* \* \* CoMa Professional Version (additional) \* \* \* \* \*

- fax- and voice-on-demand-system
- any amount of messages via DTMF tone recall is possible
- each category can contain up to 100 messages and/or 100 fax-pages.
- statistic of category recalls
- first-level- and second-level-messages can be put together from multiple voice-files.
- for the mini-mailbox you can assign personal passwords and download-folders to as many users as you want
- personal message for each caller, who has an entry in the numbers-list (with ZyXEL Elite & MicroLink ISDN, if caller MSN is displayed)
- unlimited fax-jobs
- Fax transmission via polling request (DTMF-PIN not needed - only for Class 2.0 modems)
- permanent poll-sender possible (caller gets fax pages even without sending a poll-request)
- time-dependent messages for 10 MSNs for ISDN
- connect-mode can differ for each MSN

\* \* \* \* \* New in CoMa 4.9.0 \* \* \* \* \*

- support of the USR 56k professional message modem self-mode
  - enable and disable of the self-mode
  - display of...
    - free modem memory
    - number of voice and fax files stored
    - number of new voice and fax files
    - modem clock
  - loading all files in the calls-list
  - loading all new files in the calls-list
  - clearing the modem memory
  - setting the modem clock
  - setting the modem parameter
    - handle voice-calls
    - receive faxes
    - ring intensity
    - go off-hook after x rings
    - toll saver
    - maximum recording time
    - monitoring while recording incoming message
    - fax ID
    - remote control enable and disable
    - remote control PIN
- no more wait time (shareware memorial seconds)
- Mac: live scrolling in all windows
- Mac: in use serial port is still available (at own risk!)
- Atari: 2-Level- & Self-Mode-Window could be opened from 'Menu for ACCs'
- various bug fixes

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<mailto:Hartmann@ThePentagon.com> or <mailto:SiggiH@gmx.de>  
<http://i.am/Softbaer> oder <http://ww.ThePentagon.com/Softbaer>  
Mailbox: 030/62709-572 ISDN X.75 (64000 bps) & V.34 (28800 bps)  
Voice: 030/62709-466 Fax: -459 Voice & Fax-On-Demand-Test-System: -573

->From the Other Editor's Desk

~~~~~  
Joe Mirando, Managing Editor  
jmirando@portone.com

I \_told\_ you I wouldn't editorialize every week! <g>

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING  
compiled by Joe Mirando  
jmirando@portone.com

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. First of all, I'd like to thank everyone who commented on our premier issue, which debuted last week. For all of those who wanted to write to us but were afraid of getting 'slammed' for their efforts, please, please, please write to us!

I've gotten quite a few e-mails about the first issue and a few posts in the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup. Some of them were very complimentary, some were critical. NONE of them were met with anger or flaming. In most cases I simply either agreed or disagreed with the e-mail or post, and stated why. Since all of those who wrote to us were fairly courteous I saw no reason not to reply in kind. Nobody here at A-ONE has a problem with honest opinions (as you will see in our letters to the editor section), and we really do appreciate feedback; and it's been interesting that most of the comments about what other things people want to see in an Atari magazine are things that we have already begun work on.

As I mentioned in one of the replies that's included in the 'letters' section, what we really need is bodies. People who share our interest in Atari computers and game systems, and want to write an article, review, or column about their experiences. If you're interested, drop me some e-mail with your ideas and we'll put you right to work. Trust me, there's nothing like the feeling of having an article published.

Well, enough of this. Let's take a look at what's happening on the UseNet

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup  
=====

Daniel Schaller asks:

"Has anyone here had success in installing an Apache Web Server on the

Atari using MiNT? I got so far that I can view HTML documents in my Web Browser, but CGI Scripts don't work generally. If the CGI Script is a compiled binary one it works. But when it comes to Shell Scripts it stops. My UNIXMODE environment variable contains the letter "s", so Shell Scripts should be interpretable and thus be executable. As a test I placed a compiled binary CGI Script as /bin/sh just to see if Apache launches a Shell, but it doesn't seem like that. How can I tell Apache to run a Shell to interpret my script? Just to add, the first line of the Script is well

```
#!/bin/sh
```

Does anyone have some experience in installing Web Servers on Atari MiNT?"

Martin-Eric Racine tells Daniel:

Yes [I've had success].

Let's check a few things, before we go any further:

First, do you run this on a full MiNTOS setup with Minix filesystem? If not, it might explain a few things...

Second, do you have appropriate symbolic links to the hierarchy in your MINT.CNF to point to the /bin /usr/bin and /etc hierarchies?

Do you have an /etc/shells file? Does it include SH and BASH paths?

Typically, we recommend: /brUs.\_"

Ronald van der Kamp tells Daniel to...

"Look at the sometimes appearing continuing story titled 'One of these days...' in the newsgroup comp.sys.atari.st.

Soon I will tell the world about Apache with MiNT from the MiNT98 CD. Until now I had only httpd in use, but that will change."

Jos Vlietstra asks for help with his new hard drive:

"I've got a Quantum Atlas XP31070W SCSI. It won't boot with HDDRIVER and Hushi on my TT030. Is there anybody who did succeed with this model of Quantum and Atari?? As second drive it worked with a Falcon, but I want to use it as internal HD. Please any help would be appreciated!"

Dr. Uwe Seimet, the author of HD Driver, tells Jos:

"Like the Quantum Fireball drives the Atlas also might require initiator identification. TOS doesn't provide this feature and thus can't load the hard disk driver from this drive. So this is no a problem of your drivers but of TOS. You have to patch your TOS in order to solve this. Or simply boot from another drive."

Martin-Eric Racine tells Jos and Uwe:

"I recall hearing about some german utilities to create a patched TOS image (embedding HS-Modem, WiNX, etc. into TOS), but the instructions were sketchy at best.

Still, it would be nice to be able to upgrade parts of TOS 3 with a newer AES (such as AES 3.40 from Falcon) and embed HS-Modem into TOS also.

If you can provide details as to how patching TOS is done and utilities to help in performing the patch, please tell us."

On the subject of what WDIALOG is and what it does, Louis Holleman posts:

"I gathered NVDI needs it for certain printer functions, I can see cosmetic changes to alert boxes using Wdialog. On my TT, MagiC 5.01 plus Wdialog 1.97 (I went back to this one because of bugs in 2.0 but meanwhile 2.01 or higher is out) is a Rock solid OS. Autofolder sequence is essential though, one minor change and the solidness has gone. Reason to use an Autoexec.bat with MagiC."

Galen (the Head YACcer) tells Louis:

"I've been using WDialog 1.98 with fair success, except that the old DA Chameleon will not run with it (so, if Geneva is off, I can have DA loading \_OR\_ printing). Are the higher versions of WDialog more stable?"

Louis tells Galen:

"Apparently I'm on 1.98 as well. No problems at all (with MagiC 5.01).

I got the 2.0 version too, including extensive docs in HTML format, but it was reported to be buggy very soon after it was released, so I never used this version. I believe (stressed, that is) that 2.01 is out, perhaps a higher version. No experience with these.

Now, my tower with all the SCSI gear is producing irregular whining noises and is vibrating more than usual, I gather the PSU fan is giving up slowly after been running for around 3 years continuously (cheap model...). Gotta switch it off when I go off to work just in case, but I wonder what will happen on the next start tonite... I think I need to get a replacement first thing tomorrow ."

Martin Byttebier adds:

"The latest version is, as far as I know, 2.04. You can find it on the homepage of 2B <http://home.t-online.de/home/ToBeHome/homepage.html>. This version should be on the Belgian FTP-site too. 193.190.205.13 atari V2.04 seems to work much better then the previous versions. Everything between 1.98 and 2.04 should be ignored."

Martin Wootton posts:

"I've never used an ST in my life, but a friend of mine is after a boot disk I believe. (If it's anything like the workbench disk on the amiga?) Does anyone know where I can find a site to download this, or get a disk from? I'm based in the UK and any info would be muchly appreciated."

Adrian Bradshaw tells Martin:

"The ST had the whole of it's operating system on ROM. That consists of TOS (the underlying OS) and GEM (the graphical interface).

A genuine ST will therefore not require either of these on disk!

If your friend is trying to run an ST emulator on PC such as the

Gemulator, PacifiST or Winston, he will need a TOS image (which is the copyrighted part and therefore not supplied with the emulator).

You can find these on the net though - try The Little Green Desktop at <http://lgd.fatal-design.com/>

This site has all you are likely to need."

Roger Cain tells Martin:

"He is mistaken. You do not need a boot disc for the ST as the TOS is always there (in ROM). You had better clarify what he REALLY wants."

My guess is that Martin's friend is looking for the accessory or language disk that came with most STs. We'll have to wait and see.

Brian van Tilborg (see that Brian, I even got your name spelled right this time <g>) posts his thoughts:

"I don't know about anyone else, but here in Canada, in 1987 Atari Manuals still claimed the ST had a BOOT DISK. Drove me insane, looking for this missing disk that never existed after TOS was in ROM.

Only disk that came with an ST isn't worth having, unless you need a disk and feel like formatting it and putting something good on it."

Steve Stupple adds:

"Well Atari did progress from supplying manuals that are as good as toilet paper; anyone remember the XL/XE manuals!!! After that they supplied frisbee's as well;) Seriously, there are some software on the Language disks (Control Panel springs to mind).

The first ST's did have TOS on disk, and Atari hardly ever revised the manuals. In my STE manual it has a picture of a single sided STFM, and a card which gives the brief shortcuts etc. that TOS 1.6 (1.06) has.

If you have compatibility problems with TOS versions, it worth trying it with the disk based TOS 1.09. I use this if any program that don't like my E's. I only can use it for program that can be run from the Desktop, I haven't sussed a way to get boot programs to use it."

Gerard Milmeister asks for information about his new ST:

"I got an Atari 1040ST, and everything works fine, but a certain program needs ASSIGN.SYS, which is not on the HD. Unfortunately I have no System Disks where this and maybe other needed files can be found. Can anybody help me with this? I am a computer collector and an ST newbie."

Roger Cain tells Gerard:

"If it wants ASSIGN.SYS it will be using bit-mapped fonts. This means it will also require GDOS (the OS extension which implements these).

You will need to download GDOS to get anywhere with this. When you do you will find the package includes a template ASSIGN.SYS and (hopefully) some bit mapped fonts."

Louis Holleman tells Gerard:



"Assign.sys is a system file needed by certain programs to work OK. The Atari came with a so-called system font, which is displayed on your screen. (Maybe you don't know what a font is: a certain type of character). You can change the type by running additional S/W, together with related system files. A lot of other software can make use of this to display different fonts on screen/on the printer etc.

Basically, you need a GDOS program. Variants are called AMCGDOS.PRG, GPLUS.PRG and one commercial variant is NVDI.PRG. These run from the autofolder. They need a folder called "GEMSYS", where you put all different kinds of fonts in. The other thing then you need is an "ASSIGN.SYS", which is an ASCII-file telling the GDOS program where to look for this "Gemsys" thing and what fonts there should be loaded. A bit complex to set up for a beginner, unless you know what you're talking about.

On the next boot GDOS or whatever variant is loaded, the Assign.sys is read and the specific fonts are loaded. Then you can configure other software to make use of this/these fonts.

Note that GDOS plus the additional fonts take memory, so with a 1040ST with only one meg of memory you need to keep an eye on memory use. Now first you better check whether or not your "autofolder" contains one "GDOS.PRG", "GPLUS.PRG", "AMCGDOS.PRG" or "NVDI.PRG". If it does, you may come back here, if it doesn't it's pretty useless to create an "ASSIGN.SYS".

Note that NVDI is commercial, you gotta buy it. It not only enables you to use different fonts, it speeds up your OS as well. If you ever use it for one week, then loose the program, you'll be cursing for another week :-). Just to be complete, ASSIGN.SYS is a file that normally sits on the root of your boot disk, so either the floppy disk you're booting from or the hard disk partition you're booting from (usually C:\).

Here's an interesting question from Andy Blakely:

"My newest Atari came with MINT, but I don't know exactly what it's for and what it can do (or how to use it for that matter). Isn't it some kind of internet software? Is there a web site that explains what programs do what? I've seen people talk about lots of software in this newsgroup, but don't know what most of them do."

Jo Even Skarstein tells Andy:

"There is a really nice MiNT-page on <http://yescrew.atari.org/>. You can also find some related stuff on <http://atari.nvg.org/n.aes/>."

Louis Holleman adds this nice little explanation:

"Let me jump into this... Atari's have a built-in OS, called TOS. Well, some early models had the OS on a disk, but let's forget about those. The OS sits in ROMS, inside the machine, so you'll never loose it (unless you slam the ROM's with a hammer).

TOS normally is a single-tasking OS. One application at a time, plus some desk accessories. Not enough for some people, so multi-tasking OS-es saw the lite. Some of them commercial, some of them based on MiNT, which in fact is the kernel that needs more items to become fully functional. I guess you have a kernel. This might be called mint.prg or mintnp.prg, and usually sits in the autofolder. Without anything else related to it,

it's pretty useless. It needs a GUI to be able to work with it, like the desktop you get from TOS. The GUI could be anything, like the Atari Multitos AES, or a commercial one (N.AES) or another open-source GUI like XaAES. With those you get a desktop again and are able to run multiple applications at the same time.

Now Mint comes in different flavors: the kernel alone plus a GUI gives you a multitasking environment, which is pretty much TOS compatible. The kernel plus a special partition with lotsa files gives you a Unix environment, including networking/internet facilities. You can add a GUI to get TOS compatibility at the same time.

With the kernel itself (mint.prg) you can do very little. It needs additional files. Look for a directory "multitos" on your disk. If it's there (with additional files in it), you may have a working Mint environment already. Also look at the boot procedure, there should be a message "Mint version so much booting".

If you only have a Mint.prg in the autofolder and nothing else, it's just a waste of time/memory. Mint.prg is no Internet stuff, but together with additional S/W you can have Internet access. For a beginner it's rather complicated, but OTOH it offers features for free, since Mint is an open source project and at the same time offers TOS compatibility. Perhaps it's a good idea to mention what type your "newest Atari" is, how much memory it has etc. If you have only 1 meg of memory, I'd say forget about Mint and run the regular TOS. De-activate Mint by renaming the .PRG file into ..PRX or something. Get familiar with the Atari and it's S/W and you can always get back to Mint if it sounds interesting."

Well folks, that's about it for this week. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

->A-ONE Feedback!  
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Here is a sampling of recent e-mails and postings regarding the first issue of Atari Online News, Etc. Other than the removal of some of the message header data, messages have not been edited.

From VM Labs' Don Thomas:

Dana,

Excellent job. I like the coverage and the fact that you have a lot of pertinent data that I'm interested in... not just the status of Battlesphere. <g>

I have added your first edition to the timeline and invited people to download the first edition from hyperlinks on my cover and news pages.

Best Wishes,

-- Donald A. Thomas, Jr., Curator  
curator@icwhen.com [<http://www.icwhen.com>]

don\_thomas@vmlabs.com [http://www.vmlabs.com]

Re: Atari Online News, Etc. #0101  
From: Alf Huckitt <jam@jambutty7.freemove.co.uk>  
Date: Sat, 06 Mar 1999 11:40:45 GMT (Page 1 of 2)  
Responding to: <J5aWeGG.dpj@delphi.com>

While dpj@delphi.com was eating a Jam Butty.....

>A-ONE #0101

Why do you call this an Atari publication.

> ~ The Editor's Keyboard ~ Industry/Tech. News ~ JagFest '99!  
1/3 about Atari Jaguar

> ~ People Are Talking! ~ Unabashed Atariophile ~ Linux Threat?  
The "People Are Talking!" is you publishing postings to this  
newsgroup. guess what? we read them when they are posted.  
Even the much awaited "Unabashed Atariophile" was all PC

> ~ PlayStation 2 ~ Atari Computing #12 ~ New Tetris!

1/3 Press release saying AC12 is out. Just because Hasbro has the  
license to Tetris is hardly Atari news

> ~ CompuServe Overhaul ~ Med. Records on Web? ~ Pentium 3?  
In the UK they passed a law that you could not call the good old "Meat  
and Potato pie" just that. because they always have more Potato than  
meat. they had to be renamed to "Potato and meat Pie"

Sorry for this but considering the title of your publication it was a  
total let down to the point of feeling conned into the download. On  
the other hand if you have a Playstation or a PC then it is a dammed  
fine read ;-)

From: IN%"pcarr@thedruid.demon.co.uk" "Peter Carr"  
To: IN%"DPJ@delphi.com"  
CC:  
Subj: RE: A-ONE Atari Online Magazine

[Editor's note: the following was received after a request by Peter  
to distribute A-ONE on his BBS and network]

Of course. I have received issue one today. Given the size of the  
magazine it will likely remain as a ZIP file for download/file request,  
and also be distributed via the FAN files network for the UK and Europe.

I've just had a quick look at it and it reads well. Congratulations.

Cheers

Pete

--

Peter Carr

Email: pcarr@thedruid.demon.co.uk

From: IN%"rmariano@ambcomp.com" "Ralph F. Mariano"  
To: IN%"dpj@delphi.com" "Dana Jacobson"

Subj: RE: Atari Online News, Etc. #0101 Premiere Issue!

Congratulations!

It looks great! Keep up the good work.

- Ralph F. Mariano, Editor
- STReport International Magazine
- MCSP - MSDN - 192535 - EMail
- STReport Forums - STReport Website

9-MAR 03:04 Atari Online News, Etc.  
Premiere issue!! (Re: Msg 80889)  
From: BOBTROW To: DPJ (NR)

Dana,

I thought it looked great for the first issue.

Bob T.

9-MAR 09:27 Atari Online News, Etc.  
Premiere issue!! (Re: Msg 80889)  
From: DANAVC To: DPJ (NR)

Dana,  
the issue looks great, takes me back to  
the old Atari Explorer on-line days when I used  
to download them off genie and the web.  
(I still got a disk full of the AEO's too)

Dan Iacovelli  
Atari Video Club Chairperson  
Dan@AVC

From: madmax@bfree.on.ca (Brian Van Tilborg)  
Subject: Re: Atari Online News, Etc. #0101

I was hoping for something BETTER than the old ST REPORT.

I know that you can do far better than this. I have seen your writings in the past in other media. Clearly what you have here is ONLINE NEWS that has some Atari Coverage which doesn't exist in a majority of other media.

If it is that difficult finding things to write about online for Atarians, then perhaps you could lessen the QUANTITY of ATARI ONLINE and INCREASE the QUALITY.

As for readers being interested in the other news. I don't think that is true because being able to read it everywhere else makes it a dog's breakfast in an Atari Online Publication.

I used to download ST report, but then it became of little value to me.

Obviously you have alot of NON ATARI readers who are interested in NON ATARI subjects and you just happen to throw in some ATARI NEWS for them to quickly bypass.

Heres what I am looking for in ATARI ONLINE.

The Quality of Mags such as the defunct:

ST INFORMER  
CURRENT NOTES

I know your capabilities and you clearly haven't lost your roots to the Atari World. But really, when you read the NEWSGROUP what 95% of the readers are looking for is HELP.

HELP FOR:

- 1)LOCATING ATARI COMPUTER DEALERS
- 2)LOCATING ATARI SOFTWARE
- 3)LOCATING SUPPLIES FOR ATARI EQUIPMENT
- 4)USING SOFTWARE
- 5)INSTALLING HARDWARE MODS
- 6)LOCATING AUTHORS OF PROGRAMS
- 7)KEEPING CURRENT IN HARDWARE/SOFTWARE UPDATES
- 8)LOCATING SOURCE CODES release to PUBLIC DOMAIN
- 9)INTERACTING BETWEEN PCs/MACS/ATARIS and maybe Amigas:-).
- 10)USING INSTALLING/UPDATING INTERNET SOFTWARE
- 11)NEW SOFTWARE RELEASES
- 12)HADES/MILAN USERS

The List is ENDLESS. There is still ALOT to talk about for ATARI if that is what you are interested in doing. Also there is an online alternative platform magazine that is looking for a TOS/ATARI Editor.

If you just want to be an ST REPORT that is fine, but it is not my interest. If you would like to be a more ADVANCED Atari Magazine then that would be EXCELLENT and I would then have it arrive in my email.

That's my opinion.

And I would be curious to see if others in this NEWSgroup support it or if I am wrong and they really like the look of AONE.

A-ONE's Joe Mirando responds:

Brian,

On 9 Mar 1999 01:39:37 G, Brian Van Tilborg wrote:

|Heres what I am looking for in ATARI ONLINE.

|

|The Quality of Mags such as the defunct:

|

|ST INFORMER

|CURRENT NOTES

[See above]

Brian,

Your points are all well taken. Although I still believe that information about what is going on in the rest of the computing world is very important, we ARE working on listings like active dealers, developers, software and hardware reviews, listings of current program versions, tips and tricks, and several other things. The problem is simply one of time and manpower.

Your high opinion of our abilities is welcomed praise. It's nice to be noticed and appreciated. But in addition to talent, we need more fingers for the keyboards.<g> We're looking for people who's love of the Atari world equals our own so that we can actually make some of the things we want to see come to life. We've already got several people lined up, but it will take a while before we start seeing some of the features, reviews and articles.

As for the UseNet/People Are Talking, there are many people who either don't have access to the NewsGroups or choose not to wade through the large number of posts. It's been quite well received since we started the column back in STR. As with any feature in A-ONE, if we start hearing that people are tired of it, of course we'll consider discontinuing it. Of course, since you and many others are regulars here in the NewsGroup, everything in People Are Talking is old news to you. But we're going to find other things to keep your attention.

Take care,

Joe Mirando  
Managing Editor, A-ONE Magazine

Re: Atari Online News, Etc. #0101  
From: Doctor Clu <clu-da-bard@geocities.com>  
Date: Thu, 11 Mar 1999 03:07:38 -0500 (Page 1 of 3)  
Responding to: <7c4hat\$e96\$1@remarQ.com>

Hello gentlemen,

I have not looked at the A-ONE magazine, but being the editor of the Atari Newsletter for Dallas, Texas, AUNT BYTES, I can say that I have found in this day and age that there are all sorts of directions you can go with a Atari publication.

We have been strictly a ST group for 13 years... and now this year started opening our eyes to ALL things Atari (though we are a ST group with quite a few TT users mixed in with a Hades and C-Lab Falcon user). Even before this year, many things were touched on... developments in the ST world, developments in local computer news, people's experience with Atari, people's views of other platform's developments (usually mixed in with a Atari viewpoint). Plus we had sci-fi stories in there from some of our members. It's fun to look at the back issues. Hell, it's fun to look at the current issues!

The point is, the writers of A-ONE *\*ARE\** Atari users. Atari serves a purpose in the REAL WORLD talking about issues other than Atari, and shows the world that Atari still has a footing amongst everyone else.

We are not just geeks with a weird platform. We are regular people using a computer. The fact that a Atari is used to make a newsletter

about anything other than Atari says a lot about the platform.

Recently the Atari Users of North Texas held a Y2K discussion on our website. The chat room was packed with Atari users, PC users.. who knows how many were there... our website activity monitor only shows ten at any given time, and we at least had ten.

For Alan Campbell, our Y2k speaker, and the others there, they had a great time on a ATARI related chatroom. Why would Atarians be concerned about Y2K since 8-bits are unaffected and ST's don't have problems until 2017 or so? Because we live in a REAL WORLD with REAL PROBLEMS outside our own desktops. The Atari may keep working, but what about the computer setup at your bank?

So there you go. I think newsletters should supply just that...  
...news.

And if a Atari platform makes that happen.. awesome!

Doctor Clu

CC: Classic Chips #1  
= = = = =  
by Albert Dayes  
70007.3615@compuserve.com

It has been a very long time since I have written for any on-line magazines and I would like to take the time to thank all of those editors of the different on-line magazines that I have written for continually getting a new issue out time after time without fail.

My column will focus on different technology sectors where I find something new and exciting. The inspiration for this column comes from one of the Software Development Conference classes [www.sdexpo.com] I took last year by Scott Meyers called "Something cool in C++". The class had no description and but was just to discuss some cool things that Scott discovered in C++ that provide elegant solutions to real problems. The concept is great so I will apply the same concept of "cool things" to this column called Classic Chips.

>> The Web

It is amazing how much the Internet address has become almost the most important method to get information. In addition to the web address it is easy to search for something if someone did not give you complete information. For example if someone gave you the wrong phone number you would be hard pressed to find the right number easily short of the brute force method of calling all the phone numbers. With the Internet search engines you can work with incomplete information to find what you are looking for fairly quickly.

>>Storage Technology

Burn that Disc:

In a past issue of AEO (Atari Explorer Online) Volume 2 - Issue 1, January 1993 to be exact I wrote about CD-ROM technology on the Atari ST platform. In one section of that article I had an interview with Scott Brownstein - now former Manager of Advanced Projects at Kodak about photo CD. In my notes which are not reflected in the interview he spoke about the \$200 CD-Recorder and that was a little over 6 years ago and that is now a reality. Even more important than the low CD-Recorder prices these days are the CD-R media prices at less than \$2 for a single disc holding 680 megabytes of data or audio.

In the premier issue of Atari Online News, Etc. I noticed in the ATARI COMPUTING MAGAZINE #12 had a review of ExtenDOS Gold and a feature called CD Writer. It is good to see such an important technology is still being supported on the Atari platform.

The ORB:

I have not seen much mentioned of this product in the press but the ORB is a really interesting for removable rewriteable media. The drive is around \$200 (IDE or SCSI) and each 2.2 gigabyte cartridge is around \$30. It is great price considering the price of Iomega's JAZ drives and the media pricing of \$100 per cartridge. I hope it does well since the demise of Syquest the only player left (Iomega) needs some good competition to keep their prices in check. For more information see [www.castlewoodsystems.com](http://www.castlewoodsystems.com).

>> Telecommunications

This book might not be new to some of you but it extremely useful when trying to figure out what all of the those telecommunications terms really mean. The definitions are not defined in terms in other just as technical language but the definitions are non technical. Newton's Telcom Dictionary [currently on the 14TH edition (820 pages and approximately \$30) ISBN 1-57820-023-7 [www.telecombooks.com](http://www.telecombooks.com)] is updated approximately every 6 months. Topics include Computer Telephone, The Internet, IP Telephone, Intranets, LANs & WANs, Windows 95, NT, Netware, UNIX Networking, Voice Processing, Wired & Wireless Telecommunications, Carrier Telephony, The Intelligent Network, ISBDN & T-1, Voice on the Internet & Intranets. It is the standard in the telecommunications industry so everyone speaks the same language.

>> Video Games

For those interesting in classic games and history of computers and video games Don Thomas of VM Labs (previously of Atari and Sony) visit his web site at [www.icwhen.com](http://www.icwhen.com). There are some good links to different web sites and newsgroups dedicated to classic games and computers.

>> Video Games Conference

Starting next week The Game Developer's Conference begins in Silicon Valley for more information see [www.gdconf.com](http://www.gdconf.com). One of the interesting classes is called Legends of Arcade Game Design which includes Eugene Jarvis (Defender, Robotron, Cruisin' USA, etc) and Jack Haeger of Midway Games, Mike Halley (I believe Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom was one of his games) from Atari. Also included are Elaine Ditton & Larry Hodgson of Incredible Technologies.

It looks like it will be a really good conference with sessions for Visual



Arts, Programming , Game Design, Production, Business & Legal and Audio. One name that looks familiar teaching the Sound Design Master Class is Scott Gershin of Soundelux Media Labs. From what I recall Scott (did audio for different films including Born on the fourth of July and Honey I Shrunk the Kids) used to demonstrate Hybrid Arts ADAP II and Digital Master at different music shows like AES (Audio Engineering Society).

If anyone does go to the Game Developer's Conference drop me some e-mail to tell about what cool things you have learned.

->In This Week's Gaming Section - More PSX2!! Sega Dreamcast!  
"It's A Bug's Life"! "RugRats!"  
"Baseball 2000"! "Rushdown!"  
And much more!

->From the Editor's Controller - Playin' it like it is!  
"

On the gaming side of things, I just don't have a lot to say editorially this week. However, I do see a lot of great things coming our way in the coming months. The next generation game machines sound impressive! I can't wait to learn more about them; and I'm dying to try them out! So, stay tuned this week, and every week, for more news and information pertaining to our current gaming world, and views of the future!

Until next time...

->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!  
"

Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Establishes New Company to Produce  
Next Generation PlayStation Embedded DRAM Graphic Synthesizer

New Chips to Use 0.18 Micron Process Technology

Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Thursday announced the establishment of a new subsidiary company to manufacture the Graphic Synthesizer(TM), the main graphics processor for the next generation Playstation system employing 0.18 micron embedded DRAM process technology.

Based in Nagasaki, Japan, the new chip manufacturing facility will be responsible for mass production of the Graphic Synthesizer chips on 8-inch silicon wafers.

Initial production capacity will be 10,000 wafers a month (multiple chips are produced from a single wafer). The new chips will be available from spring 2000. Until the establishment of the new facility, production will take place at Sony's existing chip manufacturing plant based in Kokubu, Japan.

The facility will be housed in a new building next to Sony's existing semiconductor plant, Sony Nagasaki, and will be composed of new production lines employing leading-edge 0.18 micron embedded DRAM process technology. The manufacturing plant will operate in cooperation with Sony Corp.

Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.'s total investment in the new facility will total 70 billion yen.

The next generation PlayStation is a new computer entertainment platform that will further expand the market for digital entertainment created by the PlayStation, the world's most successful TV-based video-game console with global sales of more than 50 million units.

#### Company Outline:

|                  |                                               |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Company Name:    | To be determined                              |
| Established:     | April 1999                                    |
| Location:        | Nagasaki, Japan                               |
| Initial Capital: | To be determined (100 percent SCEI ownership) |

#### Sony Announces Dreamcast Killer

Mar. 08, 1999 (MULTIMEDIA WEEK, Vol. 8, No. 10 via COMTEX) -- Sony Computer Entertainment in Tokyo last week unveiled its DVD-based, backward-compatible next-generation PlayStation, targeting the mass market beyond gamers and giving the competition a severe headache.

"The significant thing about this machine is that it is a family machine. It takes it a step broader than a games machine," says Kathleen Maher, an analyst with Jon Peddie Associates, tells MMW sister publication mmWire. "Sony was in a pretty good position in terms of momentum. This just shoots them way ahead."

Sony's unnamed machine (we'll call it PSX2) is slated to launch in Japan by March 2000, and in North America and Europe in the fall of that year, giving Sega about a year to gain a beachhead with Dreamcast. Sega's console launched just before Christmas in Japan and is slated to ship this holiday season in the US and Europe.

But whether Sega will succeed in the US in that time may be moot, according to recent market research. Dreamcast lacks DVD support but features a modem, and that's not in tune with consumer demand.

"In our studies, the presence of a DVD drive and the ability to play movies was a significantly more attractive feature than an Internet connection or even a modem to play with other people," Fairfield Research President Gary Gabelhouse tells mmWire. Fairfield polled a nationally representative sample of 1,000 gamers.

PSX2 may or may not feature a modem; Sony isn't giving details away. "It would be premature to announce the adoption of any particular connectivity standard," VP of Third Party Development Phil Harrison says. However, by adopting IEEE 1394, USB and PCMCIA, Sony has the opportunity to make an appropriate decision at a later date, he adds.

It was unclear at press time whether PSX2 will play DVD movies, a feature

implied by Sony (the machine supports MPEG-2 video, the DVD standard) but not explicitly stated.

If it does, PSX2 could also spell trouble for VM Labs, which is promoting its Nuon system as a DVD player-plus-games (Nuon also will find its way into digital set-top boxes). Sony did not say whether the technology will be integrated into all its future DVD players, but this seems unlikely. VM Labs, whose Nuon is on target for a holiday 1999 launch, declined to comment.

Another key to success will be cost. A launch price of \$250-\$400 is rumored, but Sony would not disclose pricing plans.

Even at the lower end of that scale, such a price makes the machine unattractive to gamers as an early buy. Based on Fairfield's survey, there's a "significant drop-off in purchase intent at the \$250 price point," Gabelhouse says. At \$150, more than a third of respondents (36%) said they would buy a next-generation machine within a year. That figure dropped to 14% at a price of \$250.

#### Sega's Stolar: 'We Won't Turn Our Back' on Gamer

Mar. 08, 1999 (mmWire, Vol. 6, No. 45 via COMTEX) -- At the end of a week in which rival Sony [SNE] made jaws drop with the new PlayStation's technical prowess, Sega Pres./COO Bernie Stolar went on the PR attack, casting his company in the role of gamers' friend, and Sony as a fly-by-night set-top box maker.

While competitor Sony is "clearly" targeting an older demographic - the set-top box consumer - with its upcoming PSX2, Sega will stick to its core videogame audience with Dreamcast, Sega President/COO Bernie Stolar said in a "listen-only" conference call Friday.

Sony announced that PSX2 will cost less than 50k yen, Stolar said. "That's \$400. We're not sure the consumer is willing to pay that much money for a videogame console."

"It's clear that our competitor is no longer targeting the videogame demographic," he continued. "Let them go head-to-head with the other consumer electronics giants racing to make an all-in-one box...our target has always been the videogame consumer and we won't turn our back on them."

Stolar, in a fighting mood after a week of bruising Sony PlayStation announcements, was bullish on prospects for Dreamcast. Many were expecting him to announce an US launch ahead of the planned fall ship date in a bid to gain headway on Sony, or perhaps to match Sony with support for DVD, but he had few surprises up his sleeve.

Dreamcast will have DVD, "but only when the time is right," Stolar said. As reported in mmWire last year (mmW, Nov. 13), the company opted to not to support DVD initially, largely for cost reasons, but did not rule it out in future boxes. Sega "won't do it until it makes sense for developers and consumers," he said.

Retail and consumer enthusiasm for Dreamcast is strong, Stolar said. Babbage's has taken 7k-plus preorders, and Electronics Boutique has

taken 4k-plus - with pricing and launch details yet to be announced. Capcom Entertainment, Midway and Acclaim Entertainment are already showing titles to retailers in the US, he said.

The first Dreamcast advertising, part of a \$100m campaign, will begin in mid-April, Stolar continued. This will be complemented by an aggressive PR and cross-promotional campaign and a "whole new in-store look and feel" at retail.

When the console launches, 8-12 titles will be available in "all the popular genres," Stolar said, with nearly 30 titles available by Christmas.

#### Acclaim Sports' All-Star Baseball 2000 To Ship in April

Acclaim Sports, a division of Acclaim Entertainment, Inc., a leading worldwide interactive entertainment company, announced that All-Star Baseball 2000 will be ready to ship at the beginning of baseball season in April, just in time for the start of the Major League season. Endorsed by two-time World Series Champion Derek Jeter, All-Star Baseball 2000 features second generation Hi-Rez(TM) graphics and Acclaim's award-winning 3-D sports engine. All-Star Baseball 2000 is licensed by Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Association (MLBPA) and will be available for Nintendo 64 in April 1999. A version for the PC and Nintendo Game Boy Color will be available in May 1999.

''With All-Star Baseball 2000, we've created the most accurate baseball simulation to date'' commented Jaime R. Grieves, project manager. ''Between the second generation Hi-Rez graphics, the new 3D batting interface, and our attention to detail in gameplay, our game stands well above the competition.''

Developed by Acclaim studio, Iguana Entertainment, makers of the blockbuster hits Turok 2: Seeds of Evil, South Park, and NFL Quarterback Club, All-Star Baseball 2000 features second generation high resolution graphics and realistic player animation unmatched in any Nintendo baseball title. New features include a special 3-D batting cursor that gives players unprecedented control, weather factors, an instant replay feature, intelligent trading and fantasy draft options, and more than twice as many frames of animation as the previous All-Star Baseball game. All-Star Baseball 2000 supports Nintendo's N64 Rumble Pak(TM) and Expansion Pak, and is playable by up to four players.

''All-Star Baseball '99 was heralded as the top baseball video game last year on any platform,'' said Mike Jerchow, Acclaim Sports marketing manager. ''All-Star Baseball 2000 exceeds last year's version in graphics and gameplay, and the exciting edition of Derek Jeter energizes our marketing campaign.''

Other key features of All-Star Baseball 2000 include:

- All 30 Major League teams and over 700 players from the MLBPA
- All 30 Major League stadiums 3D rendered down to the cut of the grass
- Scouting reports by New York Yankees All-Star shortstop Derek Jeter
- Developed by Iguana Entertainment-makers of All-Star Baseball '99

- and NFL Quarterback Club '99
- Award winning 640 x 480 Hi-Rez(TM) graphics and 3D sports engine
- Individual player models feature true to life sizes, faces and team uniforms
- Over 400 new motions include over-the-shoulder catches, breaking up double plays, hook slides, swipe tags and fist pumping player celebrations
- All-new player graphics include sunglasses, high socks and alternate team jerseys plus rain delays and airborne dust
- All-new Instant Replay lets you to view that game-winning HR time again
- Over 100 unique batting stances: from the open stance of Andres Gallaraga to Jeff Bagwell's crowding home plate
- Authentic home run swings from the games' top sluggers
- Advanced artificial intelligence simulates actual player performance in various game conditions: day vs. night, grass vs. turf, and home vs. away.
- Adjustable 3-D icon for the ultimate batting control
- Individual player streaks, slumps and errors based on real life tendencies
- 1500 play-by-play and color calls by New York Yankee broadcasters John Sterling and Michael Kay
- Authentic Major League game sounds for home and away
- On screen matchup history for every pitcher and batter confrontation
- Customized Hot & Cold strike zones for each Major League Baseball player
- Future Throw Technology to turn lightning-quick double-plays
- Roster management includes: Multi-player trades: creating, signing and releasing players; and calling up minor league prospects
- Play the 1999 Major League Baseball schedule or a special 162 game non inter-league season
- Track season-long player and team stats in over 300 categories by STATS Inc.
- Rumble and Expansion Pak compatible
- Four game modes: Exhibition, Season, Playoff, and Home Run Derby

All-Star Baseball 2000 will be supported by a multi-million dollar television, print, radio, on-line, and in-store marketing campaign featuring Derek Jeter.

#### The 3DO Company's Award-Winning Baseball Game Picks Yankees Again

The 3DO Company's High Heat Baseball, winner of numerous awards including Game of the Year, is poised with a new and improved version High Heat Baseball(TM) 2000, for PC and PlayStation game console.

In a simulation of the 1999 season, the High Heat Baseball 2000 game predicts the New York Yankees over the Houston Astros.

Last year in a similar simulation, the High Heat Baseball 1999 game correctly predicted that the Yankees would win the World Series and that Mark McGwire would shatter the home run record. In every head-to-head comparison with competing baseball computer video games, High Heat Baseball 1999 was named the No. 1 baseball game.

In the last month, ``Oscar season'' for video games has begun for annual awards and so far High Heat Baseball 1999 has ``shut out'' its competition and won six awards from various organizations and publications for 1998 Game of The Year.

``High Heat Baseball 2000 is an amazing game and we are very passionate about it being real baseball,'' said Trip Hawkins, chairman and CEO of The 3DO Company. ``Last year one of the game reviewers complained because in High Heat Baseball the Yankees kept winning the Series and Mark McGwire hit 71 home runs. If it hadn't been for that umpire taking a homer away from Big Mac we'd have been right on the money.''

For the upcoming 1999 season, the High Heat Baseball 2000 game is even better with licenses from both Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Player's Association, full management and career mode features, and state-of-the-art 3D polygonal graphics. The all-new version for PlayStation game console will bring the best gameplay in baseball to the huge PlayStation customer base.

The PC version has been enhanced to provide outstanding high-resolution graphics on a wide variety of PC hardware, including accelerated performance for all major 3D graphics chips.

``High Heat Baseball already had the best gameplay, but now we've added all the bells and whistles and expanded to the PlayStation platform. It is truly now the baseball game for everyone. As a result, we are offering an unprecedented 'satisfaction guaranteed' offer to our customers,'' said Hawkins. ``And we will further expand our audience by being the price leader among new baseball games. We want baseball fans to feel comfortable that it is easy to try our game and find out how great it is.''

To date, the list of awards for High Heat Baseball 1999 include:

- 1998 Game of the Year, from "The Perfect Game" Web site
- 1998 Baseball Game of the Year, WarZone.Com
- 1998 Best AI in a Sports game, WarZone.Com
- 1998 Best Hands-On Gameplay in a Sports Game, WarZone.Com
- 1998 Top 10 Sports Games, Sports Gaming Network (only baseball game in Top 10)
- 1998 Top 10 Sports Games, PC Sports Games

``High Heat Baseball 2000 is right at the top of my most-anticipated-games list for 1999,'' said Rob Smolka of PC Gamer magazine.

``If you love the game of baseball and love playing computer baseball games then you owe it to yourself to get this game once it arrives,'' said Karl Anderson of WarZone.Com. ``It has something for everyone no matter how you like to play the game.''

In its first full simulation of the '99 season, the High Heat Baseball 2000 game predicted Anaheim, New York, San Francisco, and Atlanta as the leaders in the AL West, AL East, NL West, and NL East, respectively (see Table 1). And while predicting that Arizona will be one game back in the NL West race may be cause for playoff celebrations in San Francisco and ``no joy in Mudville'' in Phoenix, even mighty Casey would agree that the predicted results are remarkably true to life.

The game features an innovative Pitcher-Batter interface with 9

different batting swings and the ability to ``Guess Pitch,`` which allows players to bat the way real Major Leaguers do by predicting the pitch, then timing their swing and choosing their bat location with multiple discrete swing positions. On defense, 3DO's proprietary TruPitch(TM) artificial intelligence features 9 different pitch types and virtually infinite pitch locations.

The High Heat Baseball 2000 game also features wild pitches and wild fielding throws, true-to-life base runner, fielder, and catcher actions combined with special effects such as clouds of dust during a hard slide. In addition to the new 1999 MLBPA team rosters and 1998 players and stats, High Heat Baseball 2000 will feature 5 new stadiums that include two classic stadiums (Ebbets Field and the Polo Grounds).

The PC version of the game also includes career mode functionality (recruiting from the minors, multi-player trades, and player development: Rookie, Double A, and Triple A Players), as well as a player team management mode with an advanced player editor and multi-player functionality over LAN, modem and the Internet.

The High Heat Baseball 2000 game for PC is expected to ship in March 1999 and the version for PlayStation game console is expected to ship in the following quarter.

Table 1

#### AL EAST

|             | W   | L  | PCT  | GB   | STRK   |
|-------------|-----|----|------|------|--------|
| New York -A | 119 | 43 | .735 | 0.0  | Won 3  |
| Boston      | 103 | 59 | .636 | 16.0 | Lost 2 |
| Baltimore   | 92  | 70 | .568 | 27.0 | Won 2  |
| Toronto     | 77  | 85 | .475 | 42.0 | Lost 1 |
| Tampa Bay   | 66  | 96 | .407 | 53.0 | Won 1  |

#### AL CENTRAL

|             | W   | L   | PCT  | GB   | STRK   |
|-------------|-----|-----|------|------|--------|
| Cleveland   | 106 | 56  | .654 | 0.0  | Lost 4 |
| Detroit     | 84  | 78  | .519 | 22.0 | Won 3  |
| Kansas City | 67  | 95  | .414 | 39.0 | Lost 3 |
| Chicago -A  | 60  | 102 | .370 | 46.0 | Lost 1 |
| Minnesota   | 48  | 114 | .296 | 58.0 | Won 1  |

#### AL WEST

|         | W  | L  | PCT  | GB   | STRK   |
|---------|----|----|------|------|--------|
| Anaheim | 88 | 74 | .543 | 0.0  | Won 2  |
| Texas   | 86 | 76 | .531 | 2.0  | Lost 2 |
| Oakland | 74 | 88 | .457 | 14.0 | Won 2  |
| Seattle | 68 | 94 | .420 | 20.0 | Lost 2 |

#### NL EAST

|              | W   | L   | PCT  | GB   | STRK   |
|--------------|-----|-----|------|------|--------|
| Atlanta      | 103 | 59  | .636 | 0.0  | Won 1  |
| New York -N  | 88  | 74  | .543 | 15.0 | Won 3  |
| Montreal     | 83  | 79  | .512 | 20.0 | Won 1  |
| Philadelphia | 78  | 84  | .481 | 25.0 | Lost 1 |
| Florida      | 44  | 118 | .272 | 59.0 | Lost 3 |

#### NL CENTRAL

|         | W   | L  | PCT  | GB  | STRK   |
|---------|-----|----|------|-----|--------|
| Houston | 104 | 58 | .642 | 0.0 | Lost 1 |

|            |    |    |      |      |        |
|------------|----|----|------|------|--------|
| Chicago -N | 86 | 76 | .531 | 18.0 | Won 1  |
| Cincinnati | 83 | 79 | .512 | 21.0 | Lost 1 |
| Pittsburgh | 78 | 84 | .481 | 26.0 | Won 1  |
| St Louis   | 75 | 87 | .463 | 29.0 | Won 1  |
| Milwaukee  | 68 | 94 | .420 | 36.0 | Lost 1 |

#### NL WEST

|               | W  | L  | PCT  | GB   | STRK   |
|---------------|----|----|------|------|--------|
| San Francisco | 92 | 70 | .568 | 0.0  | Won 1  |
| Arizona       | 91 | 71 | .562 | 1.0  | Lost 1 |
| San Diego     | 77 | 85 | .475 | 15.0 | Won 3  |
| Los Angeles   | 72 | 90 | .444 | 20.0 | Lost 4 |
| Colorado      | 70 | 92 | .432 | 22.0 | Lost 1 |

Game review: Where Stealth Beats Strength

Solid Snake Hiding from the Gnome Soldiers

Pete Lane Reviews Metal Gear Solid for Playstation

Once upon a time, any game failing to feature copious amounts of gratuitous violence would fail in the marketplace. But now there is a new craze for games where avoiding combat is the key.

Metal Gear Solid is arguably the best of this new genre where stealth beats strength.

This long awaited Playstation (PSX) title from Konami goes on sale in Britain on 26 February and casts the player as mercenary Solid Snake.

You have to avoid guards and security cameras, collect weapons and gadgets (you begin the game with nothing) and fight the members of terrorist movement FOX-HOUND in a bid to stop them launching a nuclear missile from a secret US government research base in Alaska.

From the start, Metal Gear Solid strives for a cinematic atmosphere. It is what you would expect from a games director like Hideo Kojima - the Japanese creator of the character which is now in its third gaming incarnation.

Credits run during the start of the game, and cut-scenes are used to inform the player of events occurring around them. These are not merely movies pre-rendered for the occasion as in most games. Instead, the game uses an impressive real-time system to tell its own story. This aids the sense of realism, since there are no lengthy pauses between these scenes and the action.

Throughout the game you talk to your superiors using a James Bond-style communications gadget. They inform you of much of the plot and reveal game objectives to you. This lends the proceedings a significant level of tension as you learn more about your mission, which turns out to be far more complicated than expected.

Encounters with the terrorists are central to the gameplay - and most lead to a battle.

Combat includes fist-fighting with a Cyborg Ninja, gun-fighting with a



psychic who can read your mind, shooting a helicopter out of the sky with a shoulder-mounted missile launcher, and coming up against Snake's nemesis - the immense nuclear-equipped weapon of the game's title, Metal Gear.

Other parts of the game see the player abseiling down a wall and steering a guided missile to destroy a power generator.

Metal Gear Solid excels by taking all these diverse elements, and tying them all together with its convoluted story so that the game flows naturally.

The difficulty level is well paced, and the attention to detail is impressive. Even saving your game is integrated into the narrative, and at one point the CD case itself becomes integral to achieving success.

The game's only real flaw is its length. Most people will finish it in days rather than weeks, and while it does have two endings, there is little replay value after these have both been attained. But while it lasts, Metal Gear Solid is an exceptional title.

#### SouthPeak Interactive Lands Summer '99 Blockbuster

Company to Publish Games Based on "Wild, Wild West - The Movie"  
for Christmas 1999

SouthPeak Interactive has been named the developer and publisher of the PC and PlayStation games based on Wild, Wild West - The Movie, it was announced today by SouthPeak Interactive President Armistead Sapp.

Wild, Wild West - The Movie, a film directed by Barry Sonnenfeld and starring Will Smith, Kevin Kline, Kenneth Branagh and Salma Hayek, will be released by Warner Bros. July 2. It follows two wily government agents sent to stop a brilliant and diabolical scientist who means to assassinate the President. The agents, one a charmer and the other a master of disguises, pool their talents even though they're not completely sure they can trust each other. Romance, humor, fantastic weapons and devices, and hair-raising confrontations and escapes enliven their adventures as the two daringly outwit their enemies.

SouthPeak Interactive will debut the games based on Wild, Wild West - The Movie at the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in Los Angeles this May, with the full retail version of the game reaching store shelves worldwide in the fourth quarter of 1999.

"Developing these games based on Wild, Wild West - The Movie is a tremendous honor and responsibility for SouthPeak Interactive," Sapp observed. "Warner Bros. has placed a lot of faith in us to deliver a game that's as exciting and entertaining as Wild, Wild West - The Movie will be, and we intend to deliver."

"SouthPeak Interactive has proven itself to be an up and comer in the interactive marketplace and we are proud to have them develop and publish a game based on the upcoming Warner Bros. action-packed 1999 Summer film, Wild, Wild West - The Movie," said Rob Sebastian, Director, Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment. "We are confident that SouthPeak Interactive will deliver to the marketplace a game worthy of the property."

The PC game based on Wild, Wild West - The Movie is an action-adventure title that will take game players on a brand new quest beyond the film. Gamers will embark on missions as James T. West and Artemus Gordon as they battle the conspirators behind the Lincoln assassination who plan to murder another President, Ulysses S. Grant. Faced with a series of puzzles and gun-toting enemies, players will be challenged to use both a keen mind and a quick trigger-finger in a race against time to save President Grant. SouthPeak will announce details on the completely separate storyline and gameplay for the PlayStation game based on Wild, Wild West - The Movie in the coming weeks.

## Capcom Announces Dino Crisis

### New Terror Unleashed From the Creator of Resident Evil

Capcom announced Dino Crisis, a new brand in the survival horror game genre for the PlayStation game console.

Produced by Shinji Mikami, who created the award-winning Resident Evil series, Dino Crisis showcases the talents of one of industry's most talented producers. Dino Crisis delivers an unrivalled gaming experience. It features all new characters and suspenseful story line, huge 3D environments and, as the title suggests, the relentless pursuit of predatory dinosaurs.

Dino Crisis will publicly premier March 19th through the 21st at the Tokyo Game Show. The first public playable version will debut at the E3 Expo in Los Angeles, May 13-15. Dino Crisis is scheduled to release in North America and Japan this Fall.

''Dino Crisis is Capcom's newest creation in the survival horror genre, a category we established with Resident Evil,'' said Bill Gardner, president of Capcom Entertainment.

''Dino Crisis is absolutely terrifying. You feel the raw instinct and vicious nature of dinosaurs when Velociraptors attack or while being hunted down by the massive Tyrannosaurus Rex. In Dino Crisis, players will experience the panic of facing off against the most terrifying predator ever to walk the earth. Dino Crisis is for the millions of fans that loved and played Resident Evil, and hungered for more. Shinji Mikami and his team have done it again with Dino Crisis.''

Dino Crisis takes place in the not so distant future on Ibis Island. Professor Kirk, a scientific genius, has set-up a secret laboratory to complete his most incredible experiment after his country discontinued funding for his project.

Though only 29 years old, Dr. Kirk's research focused on a revolutionary experiment to compile the ''Principle of Clean Energy,'' the ultimate energy source. When this new source of energy is released, it can provide new life to a polluted planet Earth, starved for power.

In Dino Crisis, players assume the role of Regina, a member of a special force operative team. Regina and her team of government agents have orders to capture Professor Kirk and seize the details of his research.

Once a tropical paradise, the island now runs rampant with carnivorous dinosaurs, including Raptors and T-Rex's that haven't roamed earth in millions of years. Your mission is simple, find Professor Kirk, get off the island ALIVE and discover if there is any relation between Dr. Kirk's experiment and the dinosaurs.

Dino Crisis shows major advancements to the survival horror genre. The enemies in Dino Crisis are extremely detailed, fully rendered dinosaurs with the amazing ability to stalk, attack and toy with their human prey.

The game makes use of a fully 3D polygonal environment, which allow players to interact in real time with their surroundings such as activating and deactivating security tracking lasers on the walls and floors that unexpectedly collapse. The games advance light sourcing and graphical improvements add to its realistic look and feel.

The sheer size and speed of the dinosaurs add a dramatic new element to the survival horror genre. The dinosaurs in Dino Crisis are capable of disarming a character through vicious attacks; rendering the player helpless until a new weapon is selected.

The game also incorporates an inventory and item system allowing the player to utilize various methods of character healing and combine weapons leading to the creation of a unique and potentially devastating arsenal.

Dino Crisis introduces brand new chilling effects, such as trails of blood when the character is severely injured, or walking in a cautious manner when suspecting danger is near. In Dino Crisis, players should prepare to be scared, startled and ready to face the ultimate terror that lived before man.

#### The Ultimate Movie Adventure Comes to the Nintendo 64 When Activision Releases Disney/Pixar's 'A Bug's Life' This Spring

Bugs will rule the Nintendo 64 when Activision, Inc., in collaboration with Disney Interactive, Inc., brings Walt Disney Pictures' and Pixar Animation Studio's blockbuster computer-generated animated film, 'A Bug's Life,' to the Nintendo 64 game console this spring.

An action-packed, free roaming third-person, 3D adventure game, Disney/Pixar's 'A Bug's Life' for the Nintendo 64 lets players run, fly and slide through an incredible interactive journey seen from a bug's eye view. Players take on the role of the film's hero Flik, a clumsy yet inventive ant, who enlists the help of a group of bugs who are flea circus performers in order to save his colony from the hands of the villainous Hopper and his legion of grasshoppers.

'We are very enthusiastic about bringing such a successful and endearing property to the Nintendo 64,' said Mitch Lasky, senior vice president, Activision Studios. 'The game combines innovative gameplay, unique level designs with a rich 3D look to create an immersive experience that will appeal to a wide range of game players.'

Disney/Pixar's 'A Bug's Life' for the Nintendo 64 lets players journey through magical, fully-interactive 3D worlds that are brought to life through cinematic quality animations and ultra smooth game controls.

The game challenges players to navigate through 15 dynamic levels and lush environments as they solve challenging puzzles in order to defeat an array of enemies -- from sneaky spiders to vicious wasps. During the course of their journey, players interact with a multitude of characters -- both good and evil -- from the feature animated film including such favorites as, Heimlich, Francis and Hopper. Many of the feature film's original voice talent enhance the overall gaming experience.

Disney/Pixar's "A Bug's Life" for the N64 features a unique constantly evolving environment or "living world" in which players are empowered by using seeds to grow plants, thus gaining access to useful power-ups, platforms and hidden areas within the lush world. Additionally, players can determine and control the difficulty of the game experience based on their individual pacing and actions.

The 3DO Company's Army Men 3D Game for PlayStation Game Console  
in Stores Now

It's 'Saving Plastic Ryan' as Sarge Does Whatever It Takes To  
Bring Down the Tan Army

The 3DO Company announced today that the Army Men(tm) 3D game has shipped for the PlayStation game console. The Company's thirteenth game to ship this fiscal year, Army Men 3D is the third title in the successful Army Men series.

The game takes place in a completely unique 3-D world where Green and Tan plastic soldiers have come to life. In the Army Men 3D game the player is "Sarge," the Green Army veteran squad leader who's a "shoot first, ask questions later" kind of soldier. Whether dodging bazooka shots, melting attacking infantry with his flame-thrower, or leading his squad into an enemy bunker, Sarge must do whatever it takes to bring down the evil Tan Army. It's Real Combat. Plastic Men.(tm)

The Army Men 3D game features three gigantic, all-new, high-resolution 3-D worlds to conquer, viewable from both a "chase camera" third-person perspective and a "dynamic combat camera," which can switch instantly between third- and first-person perspectives, allowing for greater control during the heat of battle.

Sarge controls all the weapons of the classic plastic toy soldier: Rifle, Bazooka, Mortar, Flamethrower, Grenade, and Minesweeper. Players explore and battle on foot as Sarge walks, runs, kneels, crawls, ducks, and rolls; Sarge also hops into a half-track, jeep, cargo truck, or tank and fights through over 20 trigger-happy missions. A first-of-its-kind Multiplayer Deployment Editor allows for totally original two-player gameplay.

"The original Army Men game brought great fun, nostalgia, and ease-of-play to the gaming community," said Trip Hawkins, chairman and CEO of The 3DO Company. "We are very excited to give PlayStation gamers the opportunity to experience the fun of the Army Men 3D game, and will be introducing them to the series with a high-impact, high-visibility TV campaign at launch that will rival our successful BattleTanx(tm) TV campaign with regard to 3DO's irreverent sense of humor."

The Army Men 3D game features twisted humor involving funny 3-D animations

such as flamethrowers melting plastic troops, rifle shots breaking plastic arms off, and bazookas shattering hollow plastic vehicles. Two-player split screen mode is fully supported. The Army Men 3D game supports digital and analog controllers and is compatible with the Dual Shock(tm) Analog Controller.

#### Acclaim's Re-Volt Races To Stores This Fall

Acclaim Entertainment, Inc., a leading worldwide interactive entertainment company, today announced that its explosively-fun radio-controlled (R/C) car racing game, Re-Volt, will arrive on store shelves this fall for the PC, PlayStation, and Nintendo 64. Developed by Acclaim's Probe studio, Re-Volt puts gamers in the driver's seat of over 20 R/C cars and sends them on wild racing adventures in graphically-stunning and unique interactive environments.

"The development team at Probe has created an amazing game that blends the realistic physics of a simulation with the fun and action of an arcade racer," said Noah Ullman, associate product manager at Acclaim Entertainment. "Probe's experience in developing innovative games like Extreme-G and Forsaken clearly shows in Re-Volt's graphic quality and original gameplay."

In an out-of-control racing effort, gamers can topple cans in the supermarket, tear up neighborhood streets, and crash into each other in over 20 R/C cars with unique personalities. Re-Volt contains incredible multiplayer racing and battle modes in four different modes to test gamers' skills. Re-Volt includes a wide selection of weapons and pick-ups for true arcade-style racing and a Track Editor feature that allows gamers to create, save and trade their own tracks. Shortcuts and game secrets can be found when exploring each of Re-Volt's seven spectacular environments: Neighborhood, Museum, Botanical Garden, Cruise Ship, Wild West, Toy Store and Supermarket.

#### GT Interactive and Reflections Unveil 'Driver' for PlayStation Game Console and PC

"You Are The Wheelman" on July 8

Placing gamers behind the wheel of the most sought-after getaway car on July 8 is GT Interactive Software Corp.'s new game, Driver for the PlayStation game console and PC. Developed by GT Interactive's newly acquired Reflections studio, creators of the multi million-selling Destruction Derby series, Driver delivers the adrenaline-pumping action of a Hollywood-style car chase as it takes players on a careening thrill-ride through the streets of four major U.S. cities.

"The phenomenal success of the Destruction Derby franchise clearly established Reflections as an industry leader in innovative driving games," said Tony Kee, Director of Marketing for GT Interactive. "Driver's true automobile physics, ultra-realistic environments, cutting-edge graphics and revolutionary Director's Mode provides this franchise with the same blockbuster potential."

As an undercover cop named Tanner, players pose as a driver-for-hire in order to infiltrate a powerful crime ring spanning four of the nation's largest cities - New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Miami. Through the use of extensive pre-production filming in each city, Driver boasts a level of realism through which players can clearly pick out landmarks such as the Empire State Building, Golden Gate Bridge and South Beach. In addition, each city has working traffic lights, wandering pedestrians, moving traffic and vigilant cops on patrol, all making getaways more difficult and menacing.

Capturing all the excitement of a high-speed Hollywood-style car chase, Driver comes fully equipped with a revolutionary Director's Mode that gives players all the necessary tools to "film" their own car chase. After completing each mission, Driver allows players to go back through a virtual recording of their slick getaway, reposition camera angles and placements, and even re-cut scenes using editing tools.

What good is a great getaway Driver without the right equipment? To that end, Reflections has equipped Driver with a selection of 70's-style muscle cars that guzzle gas and burn rubber! Players experience realistic car handling, complete with damage modeling and accurate physics on all cars. Cars crash and deform, tires smoke and hubcaps fly off as players round corners during high-speed pursuits. Further enhancing the white-knuckle experience of Driver is the ability change views on the fly. Play from behind the dashboard where players can look out both side windows for an escape route, or check things out from a third person, behind-the-car perspective.

Driver is slated for release on July 8 for the PlayStation game console at a suggested retail price of \$39.95, while the PC version is scheduled for September.

#### THQ Takes Nickelodeon's 'Rugrats' on a Scavenger Hunt With New Nintendo 64 Board Game

THQ Inc. is breaking out of its playpen to bring the new Nintendo 64 board game, "Rugrats(TM): Scavenger Hunt," based on Nickelodeon's No. 1 kids show on TV, to kids of all ages this June.

"Rugrats: Scavenger Hunt" combines the most popular kids property with the most popular kids gaming system and features the lovable characters, voices and music from the Emmy award-winning children's series.

"THQ is bringing 'Rugrats,' the hottest and most recognized characters on kids' TV to the Nintendo 64, the sought-after game console for children,"

said Germaine Gioia, vice president of marketing, THQ. "What we love about 'Rugrats: Scavenger Hunt' is that it's a quality kids game created especially for them. Additionally, parents trust the brand and kids love the characters. It's a winning combination."

"We've had tremendous success with our initial 'Rugrats' games in what is traditionally an older-skewing market," said Steve Youngwood, director, Software, Publishing and New Business, Nickelodeon Consumer Products. "In working closely with the creators of the show, THQ and Nickelodeon are thrilled to extend and deliver a true 'Rugrats' experience to the Nintendo system."

THQ's and Nickelodeon's first PlayStation release, ``Rugrats: Search for Reptar," debuted as the third best-selling video game during the first two weeks of its launch, according to the NPD Group. The NPD produces reports based on retail sales of video games, computer games and educational games.

``Rugrats," the highest rated kids television program in the United States, is Nickelodeon's animated series about life from a baby's point of view. The ``Rugrats" are Tommy, the one-year-old hero; his best friend Chuckie; the twins from next door, Phil and Lil; and Tommy's bratty cousin Angelica.

Whenever adults are around, the ``Rugrats" act like real babies, but when they're alone, they talk to each other with the vocabulary of five-year-olds. As Tommy and his pals wobble through life, supported by legs not yet used to walking, they show us the world as a baby views and understands it.

The ``Rugrats" world is one that exists below our knees; where mundane things turn into grand, comic adventures. ``Rugrats" has won numerous awards including the Emmy, CableAce and Parents Choice awards. Furthermore, the feature film from Paramount Pictures and Nickelodeon Movies, ``The Rugrats Movie," debuted as the No. 1 in the United States in its first week of release.

``Rugrats" was created by Arlene Klasky, Gabor Csupo and Paul Germain.

The game, aimed at the 6-14-year-old, lets kids of all ages play as their favorite Rugrats character in one of the first interactive 3-D board games for the Nintendo 64. Featuring the lovable characters and voices from the Emmy Award-winning television series, ``Rugrats: Scavenger Hunt" allows 1 to 4 players to go diaper-to-diaper in search of hidden treasures.

The music is original ``Rugrats" music composed and recorded for THQ by Mark Mothersbaugh, the composer of all ``Rugrats" music for the television show and feature film.

Kids can venture to Angelica's Temple of Gloom, hunting for and collecting broken ancient Aztec pieces before the evil Azteca Queen gets her hands on players. Kids can also journey back to the Pre-a-Stork Era to help their dinosaur friend Reptar clean up a big candy mess on Reptar's Island or scuba dive for hidden pirate treasure in Pirate Treasure Hunt.

#### Electronic Arts Ships Rushdown for the PlayStation

REDWOOD CITY, CALIF. (March 3) BUSINESS WIRE - March 3, 1999 - Electronic Arts, the world's largest interactive entertainment software company, began shipping Rushdown for the PlayStation: a high-speed downhill racing game featuring three popular extreme sports -- mountain biking, kayaking and snowboarding.

It is the only game on the PlayStation where kayaking is featured. Rushdown is an intense, delirious experience aimed at bringing the excitement and adrenaline rush of these extreme sports into the homes

of video game enthusiasts.

"The release of Rushdown signifies a breath of fresh air in the sports category," says producer Tarrnie Williams. "Players of all different types will find that the game is as close to the real deal as you can get, yet is very easy to learn and extremely fun to play."

The game is set in a variety of rich and immersive real-time 3-D environments reflecting such locations as Africa, Europe, North and South America, Southeast Asia and Japan. Players compete in all three sports on a total of 15 challenging courses set in some of the most fantastic spots in the world. For instance, gamers can experience mountain biking at full speed through the dark and dense Amazonian jungle, kayaking down the boiling and rapid whitewater of the Colorado River or snowboarding down the sheer and treacherous Mount Kilimanjaro.

Rushdown features energetic arcade-style gameplay that includes three distinct modes of play: Arcade, Championship and Multiplayer. Players race against the clock in Arcade mode to hone their skills on each sport as well as improve times for each course. In Championship mode players race on each continent against the local champion in all three sports. Defeat the champion, and the player advances.

As the player progresses, each continent becomes more difficult to master culminating in a futuristic Japanese setting on the streets of Tokyo. Gamers wanting to go up against their friends for bragging rights can do so in the Multiplayer mode. Up to two players can battle it out in vertical or horizontal split screened action. A photo-realistic replay feature is available in all modes of play that allows players to analyze their own performance as well as relive past glories.

Adding to the realism of the game is officially licensed gear such as Rossignol snowboards, Jansport and tuning tips from the world champion Sunn mountain biking team. Players must select the right equipment for the unique course challenges ahead. For example, a mountain bike with more torque can be selected on a course with steep upgrades. This adds a strategic element to Rushdown, as choosing the improper equipment will decrease performance or worse. Having the right gear for each situation may make the difference between victory and the agony of defeat.

The game supports Dual Shock as well as analog controllers.

### Syphon Filter "Shoots" to the Top of PlayStation Expectations

989 Studios, a Sony Computer Entertainment Group Company, reported that initial sales of Syphon Filter, its all-new action adventure title for the PlayStation game console, greatly surpassed Company expectations.

"Syphon Filter has had a phenomenal launch," said Jack Tretton, vice president, sales, Sony Computer Entertainment America. "To accommodate Syphon Filter's tremendous initial success, retailers have already placed numerous re-orders to insure that consumers will be able to obtain a copy of the game for weeks to come."

The unique gameplay in Syphon Filter navigates players through



interactive environments, dodging high-speed subways, deadly terrorists and apocalyptic explosions. Adding to the action is the carefully-designed third-person perspective that drops the player into Special Agent Gabriel Logan's world, with eye-opening realism.

"To say that we're pleased with the first week sales of Syphon Filter is a vast understatement," said Jeffrey Fox, vice president, marketing, 989 Studios. "Without looking too far into the future, we think that Gabe Logan and Syphon Filter are one of 989 Studios' next franchise titles and we think that the game has the potential to be a million-seller."

### Electronic Arts Ships Street Sk8er for the PlayStation

Electronic Arts, the world's largest interactive entertainment software company, announces the shipping of Street Sk8er(TM); the first PlayStation title exclusively dedicated to skateboarding.

Street Sk8er is an intense high-speed arcade-style game that will appeal to gamers of all types and skill levels, especially those with a voracious appetite for speed, authentic tricks and adventure.

"We are thrilled to say that Street Sk8er is the first title to deliver PlayStation players the ultimate fantasy adventure in skateboarding," said Tarrnie Williams Jr., producer. "Gamers will be able to ollie and grind handrails, all kinds of ledges and benches, launch McTwists off huge ramps and spin 1800's in giant bowls and halfpipes."

The game is set in a variety of rich 3-D street and park-style environments -- the highly detailed street courses offer multiple ramps, rails and stairs, which make the skateboarding experience extremely realistic. Players can get huge air off the ramps or get some sick grinds off the rails. Each course is designed to offer the player the opportunity to exercise and master all of the skating styles and combinations.

Players start off with four characters, then proceed to unlock four additional characters for a total of eight different skaters from which to choose. Each character has a unique set of skills and abilities that differ from those of the other characters, resulting in a wide array of varying gameplay experiences through the game. Additionally, gamers can attempt more than 200 authentic moves and combinations.

Street Sk8er features over-the-top, arcade-style gameplay that revolves around two separate modes: Street Tour and Free Skate. In Street Tour, a competitive event that includes course levels in Los Angeles, New York and Tokyo, skaters explore hidden routes as they race against the clock, scoring points for tricks. Blow it and points will be deducted from the total. A minimum point total must be gained in order to advance to the next level.

Skaters are awarded points in bonus rounds in the Halfpipe, Big Air or Bowl events of each Tour stop. Your score then translates into bonus time for your next Street Tour course. Players also discover secret characters and skateboards, while they gain additional character attributes. To reveal more hidden bonuses, they can then play again with the secret characters.

Free Skate allows gamers to navigate and explore the street courses without the timing pressure of the clock. Since there are no time restrictions, the player can seek out new paths and perfect new tricks. Both Street Tour and Free Skate mode can be played during the day, night, or in mirror mode -- where left becomes right and right becomes left.

Additionally, Street Sk8er features a replay mode that includes pause and slow motion options. In essence, the replay mode acts as a tutorial, allowing gamers to closely analyze and improve upon their performance.

The game also features a VS. mode where you can challenge a friend for bragging rights, and throw down on any of the courses to see who really owns the road. Players can choose from 20 custom skateboard decks featuring 1998 deck graphics from Powell Skateboards, as well as custom boards from Eternal Skateboards and Warp Magazine.

Street Sk8er offers a unique soundtrack, which helps give the game added verve and street credibility. Sporting their essential skatewear, gamers will be able to "skate" to the music of many well-known recording artists popular in the skating community. The game will feature songs from Epitaph and Capitol recording artists such as Less Than Jake, Plastilina Mosh, Weston, H2O, All, Straight Faced, The Pietasters, I Against I and Gas Huffer.

The game will support one or two players and will feature Dual Shock(TM) support. Street Sk8er was developed by Micro Cabin and is being published by Electronic Arts in North America, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. The game will carry an ``E" (Everyone) ESRB rating and have a MSRP of \$49.95.

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Message from Hasbro/ re: Battlesphere

From: John Hardie <jhardie@pipeline.com>  
Date: Wed, 10 Mar 1999 22:49:45 GMT

Hello everyone,

I got a call from Mark Goodreau at Hasbro today and he asked me to pass along the following info.

Let me just say that I know Mark to be a straight shooter, NOT a b.s. artist. He's been instrumental in working with us on Classic Gaming Expo '99 and if he tells you he's doing something, you can rest assured he is. He is absolutely a man of his word.

Mark assures me that he is working with the legal team at Hasbro to come up with a solution for the Battlesphere problem. Some of the business concerns that they have are that people will think that they are involved in some way with Battlesphere and/or any future projects (ie. Protector, etc.). This could lead to people calling them for

service as well as people looking at them if the product is defective somehow. He states that they are doing everything they can to work it out and that this is of importance to them; not something to look into when they have time, etc.

He also states that they have received numerous letters and emails about the subject. He asks if we can stop the emails and letters for the time being as they are serving no purpose other than to distract them from their work which includes working on the Battlesphere problem.

While he can make no 100% guarantee that a solution can be reached, he feels confident that something can be worked out and told me that they are working diligently on it.

My personal feeling is that we should give them the time to work on it (within reason). We've waited 4 years, what's another month or two?

I'll post any updates that Mr. Goodreau gives me.

John Hardie  
jhardie@pipeline.com  
Atari Gaming Headquarters  
www.atarihq.com  
Don't miss Classic Gaming Expo '99  
www.cgexpo.com

#### Jaguar Game in the Making

From: "Ville Jdrvi" <ville.jarvi@pp.inet.fi>

Hi!

I have gathered team that's working on a Atari Jaguar shoot 'em up game. Although the team looks quite good as for now, I am still looking for more skillful members. There are few spots for:

- Programmers(C & ASM)
- Graphic artists(2D or 3D, raytracing, modeling, painting etc.)
- Sound editors and musicians

I don't think I am able to pay you anything, but if you want to be a part of Jaguar's history, want to develop for a 64-bit machine, contact me. Also, I'm sure this would help in future getting job in industry. E-mail your applications to me, ville.jarvi@pp.inet.fi

Thanks!

## U.S. Outlines Antitrust Charges In Intel Case

The U.S. government Monday laid out its charges against leading computer chip maker Intel Corp. just ahead of the start of the second big antitrust case against a high-tech industry leader.

Intel, the dominant maker of microprocessors that are the "brains" inside personal computers, rejected the charges in a reply brief, denying that it had sought to quash competition improperly.

The administrative trial opens March 9 -- a week after the antitrust case against leading software maker Microsoft Corp. entered a lengthy recess.

The two companies jointly rode the spectacular rise of personal computers to great profits by establishing the most popular hardware and software standards.

The Federal Trade Commission, in a 50-page filing, outlined its view of Intel's rise, arguing that the company had abused monopoly power and bullied three of its customers to maintain a stranglehold on the market.

"Simply competing on the merits was insufficient for Intel," the FTC said. "The company instead chose to exploit its monopoly to gain access to the innovative technologies of others in order to maintain its market dominance."

The Santa Clara, Calif. company replied that it did not have a monopoly and was not seeking to limit competition when disputes arose with Intergraph Corp., Compaq Corp., and Digital Equipment Corp., now a unit of Compaq.

"This bizarre theory is easily shown to be contrary to the evidence," Intel said in its brief.

The government alleged that Intel forced the companies to turn over valuable technology patents that could otherwise have boosted competition in the markets for chips or related parts of personal computers.

For more than a decade, Intel has been the dominant supplier of processors for personal computers, collecting more than 80 percent of the revenues and billions in profits.

But since the FTC complaint was filed last year, chip competitors Advanced Micro Devices Inc. and National Semiconductor Corp.'s Cyrix unit have made great strides in stealing business from Intel in popular low-end computers costing under \$1,000.

Intel said AMD's growing sales to computer makers, called original equipment manufacturers or OEMs, disproved the government's central allegations. "Two years ago, none of the top ten OEMs used AMD processors," Intel said. "Today nine out of the top ten do so...Even (the FTC's) economic expert is at a loss to explain how Intel's conduct stopped AMD from selling more microprocessors."

In Monday's filing, the FTC dismissed the importance of the shift at the low end. The agency said the market segment was a tiny part of the overall market and argued that AMD and Cyrix gained largely because

Intel had ignored the cheaper computers.

"It is questionable whether AMD and Cyrix can maintain their recent gains," the FTC said. After seeing the success of other firms, "Intel took aggressive steps to capture the new segment and is widely expected dramatically to gain share in the low-end segments."

Small, well-publicized chip start-ups like Transmeta and Metaflow also will not restrain Intel's ability to monopolize the market, the FTC said. "These firms exert no competitive influence on Intel," the agency said.

Despite reports in recent weeks that the FTC might broaden its case to include other charges, the agency stuck to the three allegations made in its June 8 original complaint.

The agency said Intel forced Compaq and Digital to turn over important technology patents by threatening to withhold crucial private information it shares with its PC manufacturer customers about upcoming chips.

In the Intergraph case, Intel made the same threats but a federal district court ruled that Intel had to continue sharing the information with Intergraph.

#### Intel Now the Target of Antitrust

After a five-month Microsoft marathon, it is now Intel inside the antitrust courtroom.

The microchip giant will take center stage Tuesday in an administrative law hearing at the Federal Trade Commission, contesting government charges it illegally used bullying tactics to quell competition.

The Intel case is not likely to have the entertainment value of that OTHER antitrust case, now on a month's recess at U.S. District Court down the block.

Unlike the Microsoft antitrust trial, there probably will not be any smoking gun e-mails. Nor will there be bitter disputes over what happened: Intel acknowledges it did most of what the FTC alleges; the company just claims it acted legally.

Despite the lower profile, the Intel case carries high stakes that ultimately could affect prices, quality and innovation in computers millions of people now use.

The central issue in the government's complaint is whether Intel Corp., holds a monopoly in the market for microprocessors, the "brains" of computers. The FTC says yes, because Intel microchips run about 80 percent of the world's computers.

Federal regulators must prove to the administrative judge hearing the case that Intel used monopoly power to shut out its competition, hurting consumers in the process. The government also must show how such actions curbed innovation and barred other companies' potential entry into the market.

Intel scoffs at the notion that it has ``chilled" innovation. Indeed, the case opens as the company faces unprecedented competition from rival chipmakers, specifically Advanced Micro Devices Inc. and National Semiconductor Corp.

``It's kind of funny because the FTC has chosen to bring this case at probably the one time in the last 15 years where Intel really was having problems in the market," said Daniel Wall, an antitrust attorney in San Francisco.

``It's a tough argument (for Intel) to say they don't have monopoly power, but they're better positioned to make that argument now than they have ever been."

In its complaint, the government claims Intel illegally used its industry influence to withhold key technical information about future microchips from three companies: Digital Equipment Corp., Intergraph Corp., and Compaq Computer Corp.

The information was necessary for the businesses to develop computer systems based on future Intel chips. The FTC claims Intel withheld the data to punish the companies for refusing to license key patents to Intel without charge. The patents are for microprocessors and related technologies made by the three companies.

Digital, which makes hardware and software, and Compaq, the world's largest computer maker, ultimately gave in to Intel. Intergraph, which makes specialized computers for engineers, sued and eventually got a preliminary injunction requiring Intel to turn over the information. Intel is appealing.

The FTC, in court documents, calls Intel's actions ``a raw exercise of monopoly power to muscle competitors into signing over intellectual property rights."

Intel, which reported \$26.2 billion in sales last year, acknowledges it denied the technical data, but argues it legally can decide which secrets to disclose to customers.

A recent industry report showed consumers bought more low-end computers in January with AMD processors than Intel - knocking Intel from the No. 1 spot for the first time in that area.

Intel claims AMD's performance in the marketplace ``flies in the face" of the government's theory. Two years ago, none of the top computer makers used AMD processors, it notes; today nine of the top 10 do.

``The evidence shows that competition has intensified greatly since the time of that conduct," the company said in court papers.

Even the FTC's economic expert, Harvard University professor Frederic M. Scherer, found no evidence that innovation in the computer industry has suffered, the company points out.

Scherer describes Intel's behavior as ``unfair" but agrees that its actions have not directly affected chip prices, a factor in determining monopoly power.

The FTC's antitrust case against Intel was filed shortly after the Justice

Department and 19 states sued Microsoft, the software giant accused of abusing its monopoly power. The two federal agencies have overlapping authority on antitrust and typically divide cases.

In the Intel case, the FTC seeks a far more limited remedy, if it wins, than the ones contemplated for Microsoft.

The agency wants an administrative order requiring Intel to stop withholding technical information from customers who develop rival technologies. Either side can appeal the administrative judge's ruling to the full FTC. If Intel loses there, it can go to a federal judge.

By comparison, a prominent technology industry group has suggested splitting Microsoft into separate companies selling different products, if a federal judges rules against the company.

### FTC Antitrust Charges Against Intel

The Federal Trade Commission has accused Intel Corp., of violating antitrust laws. In an administrative hearing on the case beginning Tuesday, FTC attorneys must prove:

- Intel is a monopoly.

- Intel used its monopoly power to hurt competitors or to prevent potential competitors from entering the market.

- Intel's actions hurt consumers, either by hindering innovation or through higher prices for products.

Tyler Baker, an antitrust attorney based in Dallas, says monopolists often are held to a higher standard than other companies because their actions have a wider impact.

''If it's done by a little company that has no prospect of driving another company out of business, that's one thing, but when it's done by a big company that has 85 percent of the market, the effect may be to squelch the competition,'' he said.

### U.S., Intel In Surprise Pact On Eve Of Trial

The U.S. government announced a surprise settlement with Intel Corp Monday, just one day before a major antitrust trial against the leading computer chip maker was to begin.

The government had accused Intel of using its dominance in making the chips at the heart of most personal computers to bully its competitors and stifle innovation.

The Federal Trade Commission, which had brought the charges last June, said the proposed agreement still had to be voted on by its full four-member commission within the next few days.

''The commission set out to establish a principle and the staff believes

that the proposed agreement achieves that goal," an FTC spokeswoman said.

The agreement tracks much of the remedy the FTC had sought in the case, according to persons with knowledge of it.

The FTC got Intel to stop withholding products or intellectual property when it has a dispute with customers, according to persons with knowledge of the case.

Intel won exceptions to that remedy in special circumstances. And it need not admit that it holds monopoly power for the processors that run personal computers.

Shares in Intel rose Monday, boosted in part by the accord with the FTC, analysts said. Intel stock closed up \$5.00 at \$119.63, compared with Friday.

The FTC had charged that Intel withheld information, prototypes and technical assistance when computer makers would not surrender their intellectual property for free.

The suit was one of two high-profile cases brought last year by the government against the nation's leading high-technology companies in the personal computing industry. The Justice Department's case against software giant Microsoft Corp continues.

In Redmond, Wash., Microsoft counsel Brad Smith said: "I don't think (the settlement) has an effect directly on our case."

Smith said the Intel case is more closely related to an earlier Microsoft issue, a narrow 1995 settlement over how it handled the licensing of its software to PC makers.

Microsoft's stock closed up \$4.06 to \$159.

Santa Clara, Calif.-based Intel is still under investigation by the government on broad allegations. But the FTC's top antitrust investigator, William Baer, suggested the door was open to a settlement that would resolve all charges.

"There are remaining issues under investigation by the commission," he said. "The commission's staff is committed to working expeditiously to resolve those concerns."

The FTC has not discussed its broader investigation. But critics say Intel is working to expand its chip so that it displaces most other chips in the computer, such as those for the modem.

Eventually, such changes would have the twin effects of pushing out competitors and minimizing the role of computer makers, the critics say. Computer makers would be little more than sales forces selling boxes containing Intel chips and disk drives, and perhaps some memory, with a keyboard and a screen on the side.

But in the case that was settled Monday, the FTC had accused Intel of coercing three major, established customers into granting access to their technology free.

Those customers were Intergraph Corp a maker of high-end computers for graphics, Compaq Computer Corp., the largest maker of personal computers



in the world, and Digital Equipment Corp., which owned the high-speed 'Alpha' chip that competed with Intel. Digital has since been acquired by Compaq.

Intel president and chief executive officer Craig Barrett welcomed the settlement. "We view this compromise agreement as a win-win for both parties and we are satisfied that the agreement gives us value for our intellectual property rights," Barrett said in a statement.

Antitrust experts said by settling, Intel had avoided laundering its dirty linen in public, even though Intel said there were few or none of the embarrassing e-mails which showed up in the Microsoft trial.

The lack of a court decision also leaves the picture fuzzy for other companies, because a consent decree sets no precedents.

"The underlying issues of how antitrust law interacts with intellectual property law will have to be left for another day," said Howard Morse, a lawyer with Drinker, Biddle & Reath.

Intergraph, which has a separate court case pending against Intel, said it was "hopeful that the settlement will protect the industry and will assure fair business practices by Intel in the future."

Compaq welcomed the pact and said it would continue to work with Intel to provide innovation in personal computers.

#### Justice, Microsoft Not In Talks

There have been no settlement talks between Microsoft Corp and the government and any company offer to settle the antitrust case would face skepticism, a source close to government lawyers said Tuesday.

"There's been no discussions, nobody has talked yet," said the source. "There's a possibility that Microsoft might make some offer, but the government is generally skeptical it would be a serious offer."

Microsoft suggested that the onus was on the government to come up with a settlement proposal.

"The government has not made any good-faith attempt to settle this in a way that did not violate our right to improve our products for our customers," said Microsoft spokesman Dan Leach.

But an economist said that Microsoft was being unrealistic.

The antitrust trial has gone well for the government and it can "reasonably seek a pretty strong remedy," said Carl Shapiro, a University of California at Berkeley economist who was once chief economist for the Justice Department antitrust division.

"Are they (at Microsoft) prepared to be realists?" asked Shapiro. "So far they haven't been."

Speculation that Microsoft might settle its antitrust case with the Justice Department and 19 states was fueled by a surprise settlement Monday between the Federal Trade Commission and chip maker Intel Corp.

That helped drive up Microsoft stock Tuesday and Wednesday, which closed up \$2.8125 at \$161.8125.

The government has charged the software giant with holding monopoly power with its Windows operating system for personal computers. The government alleges that Microsoft has abused that power.

When the Microsoft trial broke last month for six or more weeks, District Court Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson suggested the two sides should use their time wisely. That was read as suggesting that settlement talks should be held.

But it would be far more difficult to settle the Microsoft case than the Intel case, experts say.

The Federal Trade Commission laid out specific proposed remedies in its complaint. Intel agreed to those remedies, with some modifications.

The government case against Microsoft laid out no proposed remedies.

And while the outcome of the Intel trial was unclear -- it had not started when the deal was cut -- the government has the edge in the Microsoft trial. Most observers expect Jackson to rule against Microsoft after hearing rebuttal witnesses and closing arguments.

Privately, people involved in the case have talked about the possibility of a separate "remedies phase," to take testimony from people hurt by Microsoft and to consider the pluses and minuses of various solutions.

The remedies phase alone could take two weeks to a month, those people close to the case have said.

Against this background, Microsoft would have to make an attractive offer to the Justice Department to get things going, experts said.

There is no reason to expect the Justice Department to go to Microsoft.

The Justice Department "had a kind of unpleasant back and forth leading up to the trial," said Shapiro.

Microsoft proposed talks before the trial and the government agreed. But the government lawyers were disappointed by Microsoft, which, in their estimation, seemed to make no serious offer to settle.

#### Philips Launches Hostile Bid For VLSI

Philips Electronics NV Friday formally launched a \$777 million hostile bid for VLSI Technology Inc. and filed suit to block the California chipmaker's "poison pill" takeover defense.

The developments, which were expected, came one week after the Netherlands-based electronics company disclosed an interest in buying VLSI as part of a plan to expand in North America.

Philips is seeking to buy VLSI for \$17 a share. The offer expires April 1.

In its first statement since Philips announced Thursday plans to start a hostile offer, VLSI said it will review the bid and urged investors to take no action with respect to it.

"The unsolicited offer has been referred to the VLSI board of directors for its review," said the San Jose, Calif.-based company, which makes computer chips for products such as cellular phones.

Federal rules require VLSI to make a recommendation about the offer no later than March 18.

VLSI is considered vulnerable to a hostile offer because the six members of its board of directors are up for election at the company's annual shareholders meeting this spring. Philips has said it plans to nominate a board slate in an effort to oust the current board.

The lawsuit, filed in the Delaware Chancery Court, contends the VLSI board "had refused to redeem the (poison) pill despite the attractiveness" of Philips' offer. The poison pill would make it prohibitively expensive for Philips to buy VLSI if it acquired more than 20 percent of VLSI stock.

VLSI had no comment on the lawsuit.

Shares of VLSI closed unchanged at \$18.31 on Nasdaq. The stock has been trading above the \$17 bid for several days on speculation VLSI will eventually be sold at a higher price.

#### AT&T Says It Doesn't Want to Buy AOL

AT&T Corp. doesn't want to acquire the nation's largest Internet provider, America Online, despite persistent rumors about such a deal, AT&T Chairman C. Michael Armstrong said Thursday. "We are absolutely not interested in, nor are we pursuing acquiring America Online," Armstrong said, responding to a question about whether a deal between the two titan companies is in the works.

There have been published reports that the two companies were thinking about pairing up. AOL, meanwhile, had wanted federal regulators, as a condition of approving AT&T's planned merger with cable giant Tele-Communications, to make the merged company provide other companies with access to TCI's high-speed lines.

#### Group Suggests Microsoft Should Restructure

The Software and Information Industries Association said Microsoft Corp. should restructure if it loses its antitrust trial, the Wall Street Journal reported Thursday, citing a confidential report from the trade group.

The group represents 1,300 software and computer makers and publishers. The report called for the court to contemplate a broad restructuring to prevent the need for continuing oversight by the Justice Department or the courts, "to effectively cure - once and for all - the competitive crisis plaguing the software industry," the newspaper reported.

## Netscape Rolls Out Communicator 4.51

Netscape Communications Corp. on Tuesday will roll out the latest upgrade to its Communicator applications suite.

Communicator 4.51 adds enhancements to the Netscape/America Online Inc. instant messaging client, along with a new utility for pulling stock quotes off the Internet without having to switch back and forth between applications, company officials said. The changes extend the integration between Communicator and the company's Navigator browser that began with the Communicator 4.5 release in July 1998, they said.

The new version of the instant messaging client adds the ability to click on Web links from within the IM screen, along with single-click access from the IM screen to a user's "My Netscape" Web page, Internet-based e-mail, and Web search functions, said Eric Mann, group product manager for Communicator.

The changes mark the first major IM upgrade for Communicator since Netscape licensed the technology from AOL (last year, he said. (AOL went on to buy Netscape in a blockbuster \$4.2 billion deal in November.)

The new IM client also allows group chat sessions among as many as 23 users simultaneously, Mann said. A new privacy control setting on the IM client lets users keep their name from popping up on others' "buddy lists."

"You have fairly granular control over who sees what" in the new version of the IM, Mann said. A parent can, for example, keep a child's screen name from being seen by anyone when the child is online, or allow the screen name to be seen only by a specific list of people, he said.

A new stock quote utility allows users to type real-language searches, such as "quote Netscape," into Communicator and pull stock quotes off the Web, Mann said. A search on "my stocks" will bring up quotes for all stocks tracked in the user's pre-set portfolio on the Netcenter portal.

The 4.51 version also adds simpler access to the calendar and scheduling functions in Netcenter, and includes fixes for Java-script problems and other minor bugs in the earlier version, he said.

Communicator 4.51, a 14.7-megabyte file, will be available for free download at Netscape's site Tuesday [March 9].

## Oracle Ships Internet-Friendly 8i Database Program

Oracle Corp., the world's No. 1 database software company, Monday said 8i, its latest database program, designed to work seamlessly with the Internet, was now available from dealers.

In January, Redwood Shores, Calif.-based Oracle postponed shipment of

8i to allow more time for integrating other software and development tools with the product. It was originally slated to ship by the end of 1998.

"The Internet is not just a change in technology, it's a completely new way of doing business," said Chuck Rozwat, head of Oracle's server technologies division.

Oracle Chief Executive Larry Ellison has called 8i the only technology a company needs to use applications that are accessible through the Internet.

The program boasts tools such as a built-in Java Virtual Machine and a so-called "Internet file system," which will store and manage Web pages, multimedia data, word processing files and spreadsheets.

The database runs on computers using operating systems such as Windows NT from Microsoft Corp., the Solaris version of the Unix operating system from Sun Microsystems Inc., and Hewlett-Packard's version of Unix, among others.

#### No Hometown for AOL users

America Online Inc. users are fuming over continued problems with Hometown AOL, a personal home page service introduced last fall.

Hometown allows AOL subscribers to build their own home pages using a simple interface, but many users say getting their pages online hasn't been so simple.

According to complaints posted on AOL message boards, and interviews with ZDNN, the Hometown software either fails to save the Web page or can't connect to Hometown's servers.

And since the problem was first reported last month, users say they haven't noticed any improvements.

"When I try to publish [my Web page] I end up in this waiting process that can go on for hours and hours at a time, and that never gets resolved," said Hometown user Margaret Bosch. "It's an ongoing thing. There are hundreds of [complaint] postings every day."

Hometown is currently available only to AOL subscribers, but AOL plans to make it available to anyone on the Web. That would bring the company into direct competition with Geocities, which is being purchased by Yahoo! Inc., and Tripod, owned by Lycos Inc.

AOL says the service is just too popular, and that even doubling the capacity of its servers' Web connection hasn't solved the problem.

"What you may be experiencing is that occasionally, during peak hours, the high number of people creating and updating their Web pages may sometimes affect a user's ability to upload and publish their personal Web page," wrote a Hometown representative on an AOL message board Tuesday. "We have recently doubled the Hometown AOL access capacity and plan to continue growing capacity in the coming months."

But users say the delays occur no matter what time they try to publish, and that some of their screen name accounts are affected while others are not.

"I have tried to publish at early morning hours, middle of the night, and during midday," one Hometown user posted.

"I spent the whole weekend trying to publish a page," wrote another user. "Starts to publish then ... gets stuck at five or 16 percent, then I get booted."

America Online has had a spotty reliability record, partly because it has the largest user base of any online service, with more than 16 million members.

In 1997 AOL became notorious for its users' difficulties in even completing a dial-up connection, a problem that took large infrastructure investments to ease.

#### Gateway to Offer Free Internet Service

Personal computer maker Gateway Inc. joined forces with an online store Wednesday and offered its customers free Internet access for one year in an attempt to beef up sales.

Gateway, known for the bovine images on its packages, said Wednesday it will launch a new Web site in conjunction with the e-commerce unit of NECX, a privately held company based in Peabody, Mass., with an online retail shop.

#### Sparks May Fly at Seybold Show

BOSTON -- A pair of keynote addresses by publishing archrivals Adobe Systems Inc. and Quark Inc. should add drama to this week's Seybold Seminars, returning here following a two-year sabbatical in New York.

Adobe plans to launch its professional publishing tool, InDesign, on Tuesday. Officials at the San Jose, Calif., company say the next-generation product has been designed with the goal to lure users away from Quark's flagship QuarkXPress. Adobe expects to ship the software, priced at \$699, in the second quarter. Adobe will also demonstrate Adobe GoLive 4.0, the first cross-platform version of GoLive Systems Inc.'s tool. (Adobe acquired GoLive, of Menlo Park, Calif., in January.) Formerly known as GoLive CyberStudio, Adobe GoLive 4.0 is scheduled to ship for the Macintosh in March, followed by version 4.0 for Windows in the second quarter, both selling for \$299.

According to sources, Quark will roll out its publishing road map for 1999 in a Wednesday presentation that may include some details about QuarkXPress 5.0, the next major rev to the Denver-based company's desktop-publishing package.

Also vying for the show spotlight will be Silicon Graphics Inc., of

Mountain View, Calif., which will unveil a new digital asset management system, called StudioCentral, on Tuesday.

Among the companies making Internet-related product announcements at the show will be Worldweb.net, Banta Integrated Media and Marathon Innovations.

Worldweb.net, of Alexandria, Va., will announce on Tuesday the availability of Expressroom 6.0, an XML-based content management system with a Java front-end, starting at \$25,000. To date, Worldweb has offered services to companies, but it will now hand off Expressroom 6.0 to customers such as Kiplinger's and U.S. News and World Report to help them publish their sites internally.

Banta, of Cambridge, Mass., is launching its new BSolutions offerings, which focus on the integration of content management and e-commerce capabilities. The BMedia 2.0 enterprise content management system, formerly Banta's Centrus tool, is scheduled for release in the second quarter, starting at \$75,000.

Marathon Innovations, of Morrisville, N.C., is introducing the SmartPath MAS workflow software for Web-based media development and publishing. SmartPath is available immediately, starting at \$125,000.

The show runs from March 1 to 5. It is produced by ZD Events Inc., the expo wing of Ziff-Davis, which publishes PC Week Online.

#### Linux Holds First U.S. Conference

The man whose computer software is quietly challenging Microsoft Corp.'s industry-dominating Windows operating system doesn't have any interest in being like the software giant's chairman Bill Gates. "Bill who?" Linus Torvalds said Tuesday.

At times bashful, at times brash, Torvalds enjoyed his first major coming-out party Tuesday as thousands of software developers, analysts and computer users came to LinuxWorld. It was the first major conference and exposition for the operating system, which was developed by Torvalds in the early 1990s when he was a student in Finland.

#### Maybe Y2K Won't Be All Bad - Commentary

MARIETTA, GEORGIA, U.S.A., 1999 MAR 2 (Newsbytes) -- By Jeffrey Kagan, Newsbytes. Don't ignore the good things the y2k bug can bring. Maybe Y2K isn't such a bad thing after all. What if?

What if, you woke up one day and couldn't get CNN?

What if, your kids couldn't get the Cartoon Network?

What if, you couldn't check e-mail or they couldn't play Nintendo?

What if, you couldn't join your favorite chat room?

What if, you couldn't surf the Web and keep up with newspapers from all over the country and the world?

What if you couldn't share documents with coworkers and continue to work no matter what or where?

It would be awful. Or would it?

Finally, the Y2K issue that we've been debating about in technology trade journals for years has reached the mainstream, and the media hype apparatus is in full swing. All we hear about is the terrible wrath we'll have to face in a few months. We are all focusing on the bad stuff that could happen.

But like every cloud, Y2K could have a silver lining. In a case of unintended consequences outnumbering intended consequences, Y2K could herald in the longest "snow day" we've seen. This could be the biggest human bonding experiment since the 60's.

We are becoming a society that finds it easier, and even preferable to hide behind our computer screens and chat with a faceless, nameless stream of words from across the country or across the globe, rather than deal with people face to face, and all the complexities, good and bad, of the human relationship.

Technology has allowed us to do more, contact more, accomplish more, run faster and jump higher than ever before. But somehow in spite of all this connectivity, we are more cut off and feel more alone than ever before. Technology that was supposed to help us get work done more quickly so we could spend more time with our family and friends has instead simply allowed us to do more work.

Technology can be protective. How many times do you hide behind technology and send an e-mail rather than make a phone call to avoid the live interaction for whatever reason?

Technology can be addictive. How often do you want to run to check e-mail on weekends or vacations?

It's a different world from the one we grew up in. Different priorities. Different challenges. There's an urgency about everything. Even the things that aren't important are still urgent. It's a frenzied pace without time to think.

And as an observer, someone who has lived in both worlds, I'm not sure it's all good. We seem to be lost in our technology and are losing our humanity.

Maybe, if we're lucky, this Y2K thing could have some lasting benefits to the human condition. What if the information avalanche we all deal with on a daily basis stopped? Even for a short time. Just enough to stop and smell a few roses.

What if AT&T, MCI WorldCom, Sprint and the Baby Bells didn't work for a few days? What if we couldn't get a dial tone? Sure there are serious sides to this question. But maybe. Just maybe, instead of constantly reacting to the urgency of a ringing phone, we'd actually have time to stop and think. To contemplate a sunset. To look at our kids playing or our spouse glowing in the light of the fireplace. To count our blessings and realize just how lucky we are.



Maybe, if we can't join that chat room with friends from across the country, we'll wander outside and chat with our neighbors from across the street.

Maybe, if there is no cable TV, we can find time to shoot the breeze with good friends like we used to.

Maybe, if we aren't buried in a couple hundred e-mail messages each day we'll find time to talk with our coworkers and clients, face to face.

Maybe, if we aren't so preoccupied, treading water in an endless deluge of information, we'll have time to tell our kids we love them, and tell our spouses how important they are to us.

Maybe, if we aren't so consumed with trying to read between the lines of e-mails to determine if they were being funny, sarcastic or really upset with us, we'd have time to talk to each other and hear the inflections in voices.

Maybe, if we weren't so buried in the sterile information age we'd have the time to get to know each other again and build relationships with our friends and family.

Would that be so bad?

Maybe Y2K will give us some of that time. Maybe we would talk to our kids more than ten minutes a day. Maybe as a result we would be better parents and husbands and wives and sons and daughters and brothers and sisters and friends.

Sure there is lots to be concerned about with the brewing storm clouds called Y2K. Squirrel away a little food and water like you would if a big storm is getting ready to roll into town. But like all storm clouds, Y2K could have a silver lining which, if we are lucky, could have longer lasting ripples than the obvious ones we are preparing for.

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#### Worker's E-mail Subject to Snooping

Like e-mailing dirty jokes? Don't try sending one to Texas Health Resources workers. The Southwest hospital chain uses special software to automatically track and detect unseemly electronic messages exchanged by 3,000 employees.

In a growing corporate backlash against inflammatory and potentially incriminating messages, companies are cracking down on e-mail with measures that go well beyond merely issuing bureaucratic warnings about abuse. All in all, 20% of companies were regularly peeking at e-mails last year, up from 15% in 1997, the American Management Association says.

Microsoft Corp. will fix a flaw in Windows 98 that allowed the software giant to collect unique computer identifying information without a user's knowledge, company executives said Sunday.

But a software programmer who detected the problem said he remained concerned Microsoft was amassing a huge database that theoretically could be used to track down the authors of individual documents.

Rob Bennett, a group product manager at Microsoft, said the company learned Friday that Windows 98 users were transmitting a unique hardware identification number during the registration process -- even when they specifically elected not to send data about their hardware.

The problem first was disclosed in Sunday's New York Times.

Bennett said the bug would be fixed in an update to the widely used 8-month-old operating system, expected to be released over the summer.

The issue affects only users whose computers have Ethernet adapter cards, most common in office computers connected to a local area network, but it raises new questions about privacy in a world in which people increasingly exchange electronic information over the Internet.

Microsoft also said it plans to eliminate a feature in its Office 97 word processing and spreadsheet software after concerns were raised about the use of the hardware identification number to generate unique numbers for each document.

"We're very, very concerned about privacy issues and the perception of privacy issues, so this is not going to be there in Office 2000," said Steven Sinofsky, a Microsoft vice president.

Richard Smith, president of Phar Lap Software Inc. in Cambridge, Mass., said he discovered the Office and Windows issues and brought them to Microsoft's attention after privacy concerns were raised about identification numbers on Intel Corp.'s new Pentium III computer chips.

"I was explicitly looking for a problem like this," said Smith, whose company produces industrial operating systems and software development tools, including many that support Microsoft platforms.

He said he was concerned that Microsoft is building a database of Ethernet addresses that "allows them to track where documents came from."

And he said he suspected that the automatic transmission of Ethernet addresses in the Windows 98 registration process was part of an effort by the company to detect software piracy.

"I don't think this is a bug," he said. "I think it's very intentional."

Microsoft's Bennett denied the machine identification numbers were being used in anti-piracy efforts.

And he said Microsoft's database of such numbers -- provided during the optional registration process -- is used only when users call the company for technical support.

''We're not using these IDs for marketing or for tracking user behavior," he said. ''It's not something we're interested in doing. It's not something they're designed to do."

Sinofsky, who heads up Microsoft's Office operations, said that because anybody could use a given computer or change identifying information on a document, it was ''not conceivable" that a specific document could be linked to a specific person. But he acknowledged there was a legitimate "emotional" element to such concerns.

''I would say most people don't quite get how computers work, and they're suspicious of computers in general," he said. "That's probably why a lot of these privacy concerns are happening."

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